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in opposition to the Dogmas of
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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

TITLES OF THE PSALMS

SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

All Communications

W. V. Butterfield
16 Westfield Road,
Cheadle Hulme
Stockport, England

J. A. DeFries
R.D.1.
Forestville
New York, U.S.A.

At the Table of the Lord

“ I . . . brought you unto myself ”

WE are journeying with our brethren of Israel through the wilderness, and are permitted to share the help they knew, provided by the God of Israel. We are allowed to perceive their failures as well, recognising our own weakness in them ; for we, also being flesh, are subject to sin. We might be inclined to say, “ If I had been in their place, I wouldn’t have murmured as they did.” But let’s stop for a moment, and look back over this last week, and ask ourselves, “ Have I murmured, complained ; been unhappy about my lot ? ” The answer for each one of us would unfortunately be, “ Yes, I have ”.

As we are allowed then to share their experiences—as we travel with them through the wilderness, what great help we find, even as they did. Let us review for a moment their situation. After 430 years in Egypt, God had brought them out, delivered them from oppression by the miracle of the plagues upon Egypt. They had at God’s command, put the blood of the Lamb upon the doorpost, and as a result, their firstborn were saved. They had passed through the Red Sea between walls of water, on dry ground. These same waters had overwhelmed and destroyed Pharaoh and his great army. They had been granted food—Manna—the Bread of Life. As they journeyed, they could look ahead and behind them, and realise they were a part of a very great host ; 600,000 men alone, besides women and children. Not only this, but as they looked ahead, they would see by day the pillar of cloud ; by night, the pillar of fire ; leading them through that vast and terrible wilderness. At His command, they journeyed ; at His command they camped ; all under His guidance, His presence.

As we are privileged to journey with our brethren, through the record preserved for us, God should be as close to us as He was to them. We, brethren and sisters, are not alone ; His presence is always there to provide, to guide, to instruct, to bless, to conquer the adversary, to confound the great powers in the earth. How great then is our benefit as we accompany our brethren and sisters of Israel in their journey. In particular, today’s portion in Exodus 19 and 20 is a present help. Israel had come in their journey under God’s guidance to Sinai—a wild and desolate place. Pictures of Sinai we have seen reveal it to be truly a wilderness as it was in Moses’ day. The record in Exodus 19:2 tells us :

“ They . . . departed . . . and were come to the desert of

Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness ; and there Israel camped before the mount.”

They were led to this wilderness, to this mount by the Spirit of God, in the cloud and in the fire. Here in the wilderness they were separated from all other people. As they looked around, they would see they were alone, no other people for many miles around. This separation by the Spirit was not without purpose—to show Israel that their God had indeed taken them out, separated them from all other people, and now would reveal to them His Purpose—His Plan of salvation for His people.

“ Thus shalt thou say . . . ”

As they camped before Mount Sinai, God called Moses up into the mount and spoke to him :

“ . . . Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel ; ” (*verse 3*)

How great a blessing that God should speak unto Israel through Moses, to reveal the promise in store. Through the words of Moses preserved by the Spirit, He speaks to us as well. Let us, brethren and sisters, listen and take His words to our hearts.

What did God speak?

“ Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself.” (*verse 4*)

Brought unto God! Not just in an ordinary way, but “ on eagles’ wings ”. This is only possible through the power of God, as the figure “ on eagles’ wings ” shows. His people were by an extraordinary power lifted up, brought unto Him, borne by His Spirit, out of Egypt. How great a deliverance—how telling the figure ; for if we have ever seen an eagle or a hawk soaring above the earth, it is beautiful—an awe-inspiring sight—for it can fly with great power ; it soars with much grace. This is how God brought His people out of Egypt—with great Power, with miraculous grace.

As we experience their deliverance through Moses’ words preserved for us, we realise that God has delivered us as well by that Power. We know the same lifting up on eagles’ wings—the same separation from the earth to Himself. Do we then appreciate the wonder of being borne on eagles’ wings? Where are we borne? God tells us :

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**“ I bare you on eagles’ wings, and
brought you unto myself.”**

Israel was brought out of Egypt, separated from all people in the wilderness, and brought to God, to the fire and the cloud, to the Manna, to the water from the Rock, to Sinai. All this is a great help to us, as we are privileged to journey with Israel—not just in our portion in Exodus, but in our daily living, we are delivered, are granted the Manna, the water of life, the guidance of the Spirit. As we strive to be His people in obedience, help is granted in that struggle.

“ If ye will obey my voice . . . ”

God further spoke to Israel through Moses:

“ Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people. . . . ” (*Exodus* 19:5)

Why should God condescend to treat a people in such a manner—to make them a peculiar treasure unto Himself? Deuteronomy 7:6-8 helps us in this question:

“ . . . the Lord thy God hath chosen you to be a *special* people unto himself. . . . The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people ; . . . but because the Lord loved you. . . . ”

This love was only possible if this people would hear His Word, obey Him, keep the covenant He desired to make with them. If they would do so, they were to be a “ peculiar treasure, a kingdom of priests, an holy nation ”. Truly a very great blessing—all because a people were brought in love unto Him, heard His Word, and determined to obey and honour Him.

“ A peculiar treasure ”

Because of this, they would be His “ peculiar treasure ”. When we delve into this word, we find it to come from a root meaning *shut up*—giving the thought of something kept, guarded, watched over because it was precious to its owner. The word is also used as *jewel, special, proper, good*. The use of this word by the Almighty reveals to us how He thinks of those who do hear and obey Him, who keep the covenant. They are precious to Him—like a jewel, sparkling, reflecting the light, with a brilliance that makes them precious. What a great hope is extended, then, to those who keep the covenant! “ Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.”

Can we grasp it, brethren and sisters, truly realising that the God of heaven has condescended to look down upon a people, to call them unto Himself, and to regard them as His peculiar treasure? It was difficult for Israel to grasp—as it is for ourselves; and so God helped them and helps us as well, as He revealed His great Power at Sinai.

Moses instructed the people:

“Be ready against the third day; for . . . the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.”
(*Exodus 19:11*)

As our brethren stood before the mount, they saw “. . . there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud. . .” Also, “. . . Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.” (verses 16 and 18) An incomprehensible Power—the Power of God revealed in a measure to His people as He spoke to them out of the cloud, the fire, the earthquake, the lightning, and the thunder. Why was it done in this manner? *Exodus 20:20* tells us clearly, where Moses spoke:

“. . . Fear not; for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, *that ye sin not.*”

A glimpse of His Power, and Israel quaked and feared. Indeed, even Moses feared as we read in *Hebrews 12:21*:

“. . . so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.”

All this was done in His wisdom, so that we might comprehend, with Israel, His power; should fear it, and as a consequence, “sin not”.

If they heard, feared, and obeyed, they and we can be His “peculiar treasure”. The view of His Power was to prove them, to put His fear before their faces, that they might obey and be blessed.

It was here on Sinai, too, that the Law was given to Israel through Moses, so that sin might be identified, revealed for what it is—“to make sin exceeding sinful” that His people might know what God, their Father, wanted them to be like: a holy, clean, separated people, brought unto Himself on eagles’ wings—a

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peculiar treasure. It helps us in our struggle to comprehend, to fear, to sin not, and so to hope to be "His peculiar treasure".

**"That ye should show forth the praises
of Him who hath called you . . ."**

To further help in comprehending this blessing, Peter writes:

" Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people ; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (I *Peter* 2:9)

How can we show forth the praises of Him who has called us to be His peculiar treasure? God's words through Moses clearly reveal this for us:

"If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, *then* ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people." (*Exodus* 19:5)

A further help is found in Malachi 3:16-17:

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another : and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

"And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels: (peculiar treasure) and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

Here again is the key—"that serveth him". To obey, to serve, to keep the covenant is required, if we hope to be His peculiar treasure. His jewels, when Jesus returns, to gather them unto Himself, to present to God, His Father.

Israel's response to all this blessing was, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do". How pleasing to God, and so He continued His blessing in the giving of the Law to teach of Himself—to lead His peculiar treasure unto Christ.

Paul helps us in Hebrews 7:19:

"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope, by the which ye draw nigh unto God."

To those who constitute His peculiar treasure, the Law is given to bring them closer to Himself, through His Son, the Messiah. This was the hope of Israel. It is the hope of Israel that

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we are privileged to share today, brethren and sisters, as we travel with our brethren through the wilderness, as we are permitted to glimpse His power, His love, His blessing.

J.A.DeF.

Christendom — *and others* — Astray

The Spirit of the Law the Spirit of Christ The Day of Atonement

THE brethren and sisters of Israel were blessed by being given three Feasts of the Lord in the year ; the Passover in the first month ; The Feast of Firstfruits fifty days after ; and in the seventh month the Feast of Tabernacles or Ingathering.

As with all God's requirements, attendance at these Feasts was by divine command ; but if to be acceptable were to be kept in the spirit of willing obedience and gratitude. While God's commands in one sense are compulsive, a keeping of them merely as a duty is no keeping of them at all. The apparent paradox of keeping of a command, not of necessity, but by choice, exalts the commands to a position of a necessary and blessed provision of a gracious Father. This is where love takes the place of cold conformity ; where obedience is from the heart in thankfulness, and not as a matter of grudging duty.

The same applies today in keeping the command to meet in the first day of the week at the Lord's Table. This is undoubtedly a command, which those who neglect to fulfil do so at their peril. Likewise those who keep this command through fear, because if they do not they will be " seen " by the hierarchy are in no better case. God knows the heart, and is able to perceive that as a " man thinketh in his heart so is he ". Indeed, God is greater than our heart, and is able to perceive its thoughts and intents.

The brethren and sisters in the Ecclesia of Israel, were helped to see the necessity of keeping all commands as a help to their understanding of Yahweh, and His purpose ; as a means of engendering the most beneficent power of all—love, love of God and love of all God's children. So should this be with us.

The Law is judged by most as arbitrary, harsh, and devoid of love ; something like army rules and regulations. Nothing could

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be further from the Truth. The Law was, and *is* good, the vehicle of divine love (and there is no other true love). For God says:

“When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.

“I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love.”
(*Hosea* 11:1 & 4)

And again:

“I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness.” (*Jeremiah* 2:2)

“Espoused”—to Yahweh, the great God under whose wings protection was found. What a transcending thought, evoking in the brethren and sisters at the time a fervent desire, a love expressed in their united cry: “All that the Lord hath spoken will we do and be obedient”.

How readily, however, such love can wane and disappear, and obedience be nothing more than a “form of godliness”, because the power of love is not felt. God knew this, and hastened to protect the brethren and sisters from such inherent weakness. This He did in two ways: by chastisement for disobedience in the withdrawing of His blessings of food and protection; and by instilling through the ordinances of the Law a loving-kindness, which uplifted the mind and expanded the responsive heart in gratitude.

The Day of Atonement

This was a special day in the Feast of Tabernacles.

“Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall *afflict* your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

“And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God.

“For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be *afflicted* in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.”
(*Leviticus* 23:27/29)

This must have been an awe-inspiring occasion for all. The question in every mind would be “Am I *afflicted*—made *low*, humble?” If not then death was inevitable as the words “cut off”

mean. Not only *cut off* from the present life, but from the joys typical of the Kingdom which were to be celebrated for a whole week from the fifteenth day. In type the day of atonement foreshadowed the judgment of the great High Priest, when some will go on to the keeping of the Feast of rejoicing before the Lord, remembering and celebrating their deliverance from Egypt; while others will be exposed as pretenders, outwardly conforming, but inwardly rebellious to God's commands. The issue presented by this Feast according to the Law was clear to all the brethren and sisters of old, as it should be to us today: whether in humble gratitude we shall seek the Lord and serve Him; or use His precious Truth for our own exaltation. The Truth has known too many of these; men who delight in argument, in debate, in prating about some crochet, and who, while appearing to be upholding the Truth, overlook the blessed provision of the Law as inculcating obedience through "*judgment, mercy and faith*". Only by imbibing these delightful qualities of the Spirit, can there be hope of atonement, of being at one with God and all His people in the eternal rejoicing on the seventh day.

"The Weightier matters of the Law." Matthew 23:23
"Judgment, mercy and faith."

Jesus said:

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the *law, judgment, mercy, and faith*: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." (*Matthew 23:23*)

How easy it is to slip into a conventional religious behaviour; like the Pharisees who paid strict observance to certain ordinances of the Law, but were devoid of its "weightier matters".

Christendom derides the Pharisee as hypocritical, pretentious, self-satisfied and without the "milk of human kindness". And rightly so. But there is a balance. Acts of love, of charity, good in themselves, are not enough; are no substitute for loving obedience to God. Yet Christendom stress the need for love of all, regardless of any principles of the Truth so that their religion is largely the sale of the Churches' approval to the highest bidder, even if he is obviously an ardent devotee of Mammon. God's "one hundred" requirements have been reduced to "eighty", to "fifty", so that the Church might trade their approval for the emoluments of Mammon. Many have perceived this, and turned from the Church

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in disgust. Would that more could realise that this is a sure sign that Christendom is astray.

The *others*—those who once had the Truth—have slipped into the same flesh-pleasing notion. Some groups have gone so far as to be openly ostentatious in contributing to Gentile charities, have lauded the gifts that are made, until in the majority the *giving* has become a substitute for the *living*. This is opposed to Truth. Jesus who searches the “reins and hearts”, will point out to such that legitimate *giving* is but a token of the *living*, and that the one should be done but the other must not be left undone.

“ Afflicted—or made low.”

David said:

“ Before I was afflicted I went astray.” (*Psalm* 119:67)

Adversity, a trial under the hand of God is the only means of bringing a mind and heart in accord with such acceptable sentiment; of leading to the day of release, when there may be a coming out of “great tribulation” to experience eternal joy.

The Truth is not for debate, for gnawing at verses, with dog-like monotony and vaunting novel expositions. It is feared lest these Articles should give this impression. Such is far from the writer's heart or intention. The desire is simply to appeal to those who are mistaking the “form of godliness” for the “power”; to deliver such from a religious convention in which there is no hope of salvation.

May then the words of Jesus be taken to heart that “*judgment, mercy and faith*” ought to be done.

In view of the fact that God is a righteous judge, calling His people to be like Him; having taken care to record and preserve His judgments in the Law, what must He think of a people professing to be His, whose overriding tenet is: “*we must not judge*”. This is the cry of *all* groups of the others; of even the more particular who say that those who will not repent of their error must not be *judged* as without hope. They say this must be left to Christ. It would be as well for these to consider what their position would have been in the Ecclesia of old. Their refusal to *judge*, to cast a stone upon the rebel, would soon have given the quietus to their philosophy by an untimely death.

Of *mercy*, it can be said that there would be none at all apart from God. It is He who has shown what is true mercy able

to rejoice against judgment. (James 2:13). This beautiful quality of the Spirit has been apprehended to some extent even by the world, one of whose poets has said:

“The quality of mercy is not strain’d.
It falleth as the gentle rain upon the place beneath.
It is twice blessed. It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.”

The mistake made by Christendom and also by the *others* is to allow mercy in their thinking and preaching to destroy judgment, which is entirely opposed to God’s will.

In the April issue of the *Christadelphian*, an Article entitled “Mercy rejoiceth against judgment”, fails to show that notwithstanding God’s abundant mercy, there is even now a judgment necessary of ourselves by the Word. Throughout the Scriptures, the rebel, the one who refused to hear, was to be judged by his brethren as unworthy of mercy. In the commands of Christ, mercy is certainly shown, but not to the exclusion of judgment. The transgressor is to be dealt with by all the beseeching and solicitude, as the shepherd has for his lost sheep. There must be the endeavour “to gain” him by seeing him “alone”, failing which further help must be sought by taking “witnesses”, and lastly by seeking the aid of the Ecclesia. But must the cry of mercy still go on, while the rebel defies the Creator? Under the Law he had to be stoned to death by *all* in the Ecclesia. In the New Testament withdrawal must take place so that Jesus says, “let him be unto thee as the heathen man and the publican”. At this point opportunity for mercy has become exhausted. God’s honour now requires that there be judgment without mercy.

If we would understand the judgment which Christ expects of us by withdrawal, by a brother becoming as the “heathen man and the publican”, a little consideration of the dreadful oppression and extortion by the publicans (tax gatherers) in the time of Christ will supply the answer, when no less than half a million pounds was wrenched from the wretched Jews by the tax gatherers working hand in glove with the Romans.

We know how little English Tax Officials are liked; but in contrast their demands are light and reasonable, and never so arbitrarily applied as was suffered by the poor Jews of Christ’s day.

May the *others* then see in the Article to which reference has been made, that there is a lack to warn of present peril through

presumption that mercy will always be extended. Where God is defied then there will be no mercy.

Coming now to *faith*, this should be such that there should ever be a humble submission of mind and heart in seeking the will of God. Never presuming, never daring to take God's kindness for granted, but always by supplication a continual approach to God, "believing that He is and is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him". Only by *faith* can we please God, can we come to *know* God ; to emulate Him, to be like Him so that ultimately we may be found worthy through having judged righteous judgment.

—To be continued

The Titles of the Psalms

"Speaking unto yourselves in Psalms . . . making melody in your heart unto the Lord." (Ephesians 5:19)

PSALM 28

(A Psalm of David)

FELLOWSHIP with God and His Son is not founded upon some assent to a man-made document such as a "Statement of Faith", but far transcends such a limited and unscriptural view. When the Apostle John said:

"Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ."

He introduced this exalted provision, by first speaking with great conviction of the *life*, which he had intimately witnessed:

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life ;

"For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us ;

“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us.” (1 *John* 1:1/3)

Yes, true fellowship is *life* with God and His Son; a common union of those who are permitted to share this great privilege. To speak of various “fellowships” is obviously wrong, for there can only be one fellowship with God and His Son providing as John says, the life with God. Without God there can be no *life*; those only who are blessed with His presence like the Ecclesia in the wilderness have God, and are able to share His *life*.

The Psalms lift this contemplation to a heavenly plane; to a realisation that *life* is not something which can be defined in words, but is an experience. A glimpse into the *life* of the family of God is permitted by the Spirit:

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in *psalms* and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” (*Colossians* 3:16)

Only in the family of God will there be “teaching” and “admonishing” in “*Psalms* and hymns and spiritual songs”, because of God’s presence. Elsewhere display of knowledge will take the place of “teaching”; “lording” will be seen instead of “admonishing”, and the congregation will be subdued because they are made to feel either fearful or ignorant. Instead of “spiritual songs” filling the heart, there will be disillusionment. God will seem to be far off, not nigh.

“Draw me not away . . . with the workers of *iniquity*.”
(*verse* 3)

In this Psalm 28 the melody which the heart can capture is no less than one of God’s greatness and His loving kindness in His desire to be with His people.

The devout mind will sense a paradox in this: that the great God in whose hand is the life and breath of all is willing to be with those of mortal and corruptible nature. Association with the great of the earth, the Kings, Queens, and Presidents is out of the question for the majority of humans. Yet these great men are only flesh; when cut they bleed; and quickly pass off the platform of public affairs, their majesty and glory of their sun soon setting in the darkness of eternal corruption.

How much greater is Yahweh than any of these; whose glory fills the heavens, whose majesty is never fading! Yet He has promised to be with those who are His family.

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David shows in this Psalm 28 that in spite of the blessing of belonging to the family it is possible to be "drawn away".

"Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which speak peace to their neighbours, but mischief is in their hearts." (*verse 3*)

The "wicked" never advertise themselves as wicked. The greatest enemy of the Truth is the one making a profession, but denying it by words and action. These claim to know the Truth; to "speak peace to their neighbours" (brethren and sisters), but "mischief is in their hearts". Often as adversaries they are like those of Christ's day, refusing to enter the Kingdom, and not suffering those that are entering to go in.

Those whose hearts are towards God will be helped to be delivered from such. They will find that these provide themselves with scriptural arguments which are only excuses to allow them to do what they please, but the joy of the Truth is never found by them; their hearts are never occupied with the "Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs" like David. Instead their hearts are the vessels of "mischief". How greatly has *the* Truth suffered from these un-David like characters. Always contentious instead of contending; concerned only for their own petty views rather than the divine; absorbed in tinkering with the precepts for their own advancement; rather than submitting in unreserved humility, that God's presence might be the abiding and directing force in the *life* in Him.

David says concerning these:

"Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.

"Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up." (*verses 4/5*)

Their folly is that their minds will not be impressed by the abundant evidence on every hand of God's greatness. They are content with a "form of godliness", but never come to experience the joy of the "power of godliness"; which is the blessing of those who plead for God's presence, and ask that they might be worthy of such an inestimable gift.

The answer to earnest supplication on behalf of the family, of the Ecclesia, is more than an adequate proof of God's presence. This can only be experienced where supplications are made in a true spirit. Jesus said:

“And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, *believing*, ye shall receive.” (*Matthew 21:22*)

The present generation know nothing of the earnest supplications made in the first world war and the second. How brethren were threatened with being drafted into the firing line, and if disobedient would be shot; of the stigma of refusing all forms of service including Civil Defence; of being molested on the streets unless in uniform or wearing a “munition badge”. Some were “drawn away” with these things. “Drawn away—from God.” They gained their world at the time but lost their life.

In trial and difficulty which must be experienced to prove us, may we be able to be strengthened in heart by the melody that pulsed in David’s whole being, and is a power now to help the godly:

“Blessed be the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.

“The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.”

(*verses 6/7*)

—To be continued

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

“... Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity . . .” (*Luke 21, v. 25*)

THE man in the street does not really know what goes on behind the scenes as heads of governments counsel together. Their private discussions, their secret fears and the considerations that prompt them to make detailed plans for the future are not revealed.

For example, it is not really known what the Russian leaders have said amongst themselves about the confrontation with China. Whether they fear the “yellow peril” or whether they prefer to avoid a punitive conflict with their Communist rival, not because of weakness, but as a result of long term planning which includes

their Chinese neighbour in the category of an instrument or tool to be manoeuvred, if required, at an opportune time against the real enemy, the U.S.A.

Of course the Russian populace are fed with certain propaganda, as also are the Chinese masses. But they are only told what their governments want them to be told, and many basic considerations are kept dark. If it suits, the tone of the propaganda can be altered, and situations can be cleverly arranged to swing mass opinion in another direction. This is the world of politics, it is far more subtle than people are generally led to believe. An incident can be manufactured to cause hostile feelings where there was previously an understanding. Malevolent schemes engineered by one nation, can be the means of setting nations against each other. Man is indeed a deceitful creature, and what is seen in individuals is also seen in the collective sense, or can at any rate be expected to be the case amongst governments and rulers.

The Psalmist perceived the true position in his day when he cried:

“ Help, Lord ; for the godly man ceaseth ; for the faithful fail from among the children of men. They speak vanity every one with his neighbour ; with flattering lips and with a double heart (Hebrew—deceits) do they speak . . . Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever. The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.” (*Psalm 12*)

Is the situation any better in the west? Do the democracies scheme to a lesser degree? Examination of the general state of the world indicates that all nations and governments are alike embroiled in this trait. Is it surprising therefore if the world situation becomes more involved as time passes? How can politics conducted in this manner smooth out a way through the chaos of disharmony and intrigue? Political expenditure must indeed be very great. The cost of Foreign Offices and Embassies cannot be calculated. The sums of money spent in international negotiations and meetings of heads of state must add up to a vast total.

But where has the world got to as a result of all this discussion and scheming?

It may be profitable to survey some of the unresolved difficulties and threats that exist at the present time. For example the United Nations General Assembly have ordered Britain to hand Gibraltar over to Spain by October this year. The answer from the British Government is that Gibraltar will “ never ” be handed over

to Spain, or anyone else, against the wishes of the colony's 25,000 people. Compromise is deftly avoided by reference to the 18th Century Treaty of Utrecht which required Britain to give Spain first option to take over if Britain ever abandoned "the Rock". Spain's retaliatory measures are now awaited. On the other hand Britain is very much in favour of the United Nations' ban on the supply of arms to South Africa, the French however do not observe the ban. The difference between the two countries has resulted in a considerable difficulty at a time when Britain seeks French co-operation in her bid to join the European Common Market.

Britain and France working jointly have produced a new fighter aircraft called the Jaguar. France wants to sell it to South Africa, but Britain is using the agreement, which gives either partner a veto on the sale of it to foreign countries, to prevent such a deal.

Is it merely principle that prompts this or are there many other factors not generally known, that have led to such a decision? For example, Rhodesia, which can obviously get its requirements, denied to it from the usual channels, through South Africa's back door. In Rhodesia itself, bitter attacks are being made on the British Queen, as being merely the figurehead and mouthpiece of the British Government, and so the independence dispute is shown to be continuing unabated.

But these are only small matters when compared with the Far East and Middle East situations. Britain, which refuses arms to South Africa, it appears, is selling missiles to Jordan. The Israeli Defence Minister, speaking in Jerusalem, has declared that Jordan is receiving a considerable quantity of Tiger ground-to-air missiles. From New York however comes the report that some State Department officials are disturbed by information of new arms shipments to Egypt by Communist countries, but presumably not at British shipments to Jordan! Meanwhile frequent Jordanian shelling of Israel's Border settlements continue, and the Egyptians go on firing from various points in the Suez area, mainly between Kantara and Port Fuad and from the outskirts of Port Said.

An Israeli government spokesman has declared that it is impossible to extricate the ships stranded in the Suez Canal since the 1967 war while the Egyptians continue to violate the cease-fire. In addition to this he has stated that "If the Egyptians continue with their war-fare (on the Suez Canal), it is difficult to believe that we shall be able to maintain a purely defensive policy on our side". The use of this water highway therefore continues to be lost to the world and tension builds up.

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The four great powers, America, Russia, Britain and France, of course would like to meet together to formulate a settlement, but understandably Israel's reply is, that of the four powers, "Two are pro-Arab, two are not our enemies, nor are they enemies of the Arabs, so what sort of compromise can we expect from them?" But to the Arabs Israel's message is:

"Sit down with us at the peace table and we will listen carefully to all your problems. We want to come to some arrangement with you. . . .

"This nation really wants peace and will go a long way towards meeting you, but it won't come about with shells along the canal, riots in the Casbah, rockets on Eilat, and Kiryat Shmona or pressure from the great powers. They won't budge us.

"The way to come to an arrangement is through understanding in a discussion around the table, neighbour to neighbour."

But how can negotiations ever be successful, even if they were to commence, when those who would take part, if such could be arranged, are self confessed schemers whose word cannot be relied upon.

The Jordanian head of state some time ago, speaking to the U.S. National Press Club, professed his desire for peace and his acceptance of the U.N.O. Security Council's resolution of 1967. A week later, having returned home to Amman, he admitted that what he had said in Washington had been for tactical purposes only. His present position was support of the terrorists, of rearmament and preparations for a military campaign in which he could restore the situation as it existed on June 4th, 1967.

If space allowed, the Far-East situation could also be examined. Not only the position in Vietnam, but in Korea. There is also Hong Kong and Macao, potential trouble spots and Formosa, too. It is possible however that sufficient has been said in outline to focus attention on the insurmountable difficulties and the complex problems of international relations that confront the world at this present time.

In context with such a situation, the words of the Lord Jesus come to mind foretelling the signs of His coming. Along with the distress of the nations, there is the perplexity as well to be considered. Men continue to scheme. Diplomacy is rife. But the evident

result is that difficulties increase and any hope for solution recedes beyond man's grasp.

How great will the contrast be when the divine inheritor of the peoples shall stand up, who "shall speak peace unto the nations". One whose word can be relied upon; whose honesty of purpose can never be questioned. What a fitting transformation is promised; the hope given by God's word shines out the more when the present perplexity is examined and compared with the future that is revealed.

D.L.

News from the Ecclesias

Eden, New York : Grange Hall, Church Street.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread, 11-30 a.m. Sunday School, 1-30 p.m. Bible Class : Mid-week, Forestville, Buffalo, Hamburg, and Orchard Park. Alternate weeks : Revelation Study.

Our Brother Steiger, upon being ordered to report for induction into the armed forces, refused to accept induction, and was arrested by the authorities, and is free on bond. Trial will be coming up soon. The supplications of all the brethren and sisters are needed on his behalf, that the will of God may be done.

Plans go forward for the lecture in Hamilton on June 14th, God willing. The lecture is for Christadelphians, and our prayer is for blessing upon this effort.

On every side there is trial, tribulation, testing. A sign that Jesus' return must be very near. May we have the strength, the faith, to overcome, and hold fast until He does come.

J.A.DeF.

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Dudley.

Sundays : Breaking of Bread, 11 a.m.

Wednesdays : Bible Class, 7-15 p.m.

A Witness to the departure from the Truth by Christadelphians was given in Nottingham on Saturday, May 17th, in an address given by Bro. W. V. Butterfield on "The history of the Truth in the latter days".

There were a number of Christadelphians present including some with whom contact had previously been made. Evidence from their own writings gave conclusive proof where departure had occurred. Questions were asked and discussion followed the address. The failure to uphold the doctrine of fellowship was manifest also here, when it was contended that we are not to judge, whereas Jesus said we are to judge righteous judgment. Also the instruction is to "try the spirits whether they are of God". Christadelphians tolerate many things in practice and doctrine which are contrary to the mind of God, and have become partakers of the evil, and thus have lost the fellowship of the Father and His Son.

The testimony having been given it is now left in the hand of God to prosper it as He sees fitting.

We are grateful for the labours of Brother Butterfield, and for the assistance of the brethren and sisters of Manchester in the work.

R.W.

**Manchester, Memorial Hall, M.A.P.S. Building., Albert Square,
Manchester.**

Sundays : Breaking of Bread, 11-30 a.m. Lecture, 3-30 p.m.

Thursdays : Bible Class, 7-15 p.m., Onward Hall,
Deansgate.

We were pleased to have the company of Brother and Sister R. Wood, and Sister Ruth, Dudley, on June 1st ; and for the help

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of Brother Wood who introduced this month's series of lectures. "Light in the present darkness".

Plans have now been completed for the much anticipated visit of those from the States commencing August 23rd.

In the One Body, members are closely knit together like the members of the natural body, so that it is no exaggeration to express feelings in the words of the Spirit:

"Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it ;
or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."

Such is the power of the Spirit that even three thousand miles between members does not lessen this feeling, or the truth of the Spirit's testimony, as we all know by the present experience in the trial of our brother in the U.S.A. before the "powers that be". Truly, we suffer with him, and yet rejoice that he is counted worthy to bear reproach for His name. From time to time we have as a Body to suffer the taunt of those who despise our fewness, but they little know the warmth, the unity, and the delightful peace and security we enjoy with the few in the Ark.

W.V.B.

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