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# The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of  
Papal and Protestant Christendom

A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

and a warning against the deception in the last days  
foretold by Christ

**"Take heed ye be not deceived"**

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AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

CHRISTENDOM - AND OTHERS - ASTRAY

THE TITLES OF THE PSALMS

CREMATION

SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

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## At the Table of the Lord

### "THE LORD SHALL COUNT . . . THAT THIS MAN WAS BORN THERE"

**A**S we look in fear and shock at the world today, we see on every side great trouble, violence, warfare—signs to us of the nearness of Jesus' return. Some of this difficulty and unrest is caused by nationalism. Each country is determined it will be the best ; some wish to get the leadership over other countries, will fight if necessary for its goals, its ambitions. Many citizens are moved by the same nationalistic feelings ; they are proud of their country and will do whatever their leaders feel is best for the national goals.

With today's youth in the colleges turning against warfare, against military service, there is the cry by, what is called in the U.S., the "silent majority" for more patriotism, firmer allegiance, greater loyalty.

Each one of us here this morning is a citizen of some country, due to circumstances of birth. With that citizenship comes certain privileges, rights, benefits. We remember that Paul, being a Roman citizen and about to be scourged, said to the centurion, ". . . Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned?" (Acts 22 : 25). As a consequence of his Roman citizenship, Paul escaped that scourging. The chief captain, when he heard that Paul was a Roman, revealed how much he valued the Roman citizenship for he had paid a great price for it. Citizenship, then, is something which is greatly valued in the world.

We must ask, "what of ourselves?" brethren and sisters. We are, as we strive to follow the Lord Jesus, in the world but not of it, kept from the evil that is in it through the office of the Lord Jesus as mediator for His people. As such, we do not put our trust in any country, in any government ; for we know that all governments will be overthrown when Christ returns to establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

### "FOR OUR CITIZENSHIP IS IN HEAVEN"

We are not, however, left without citizenship, without a country. Paul tells us, (Phil. 3 : 20-21) :

"For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven ; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ : Who shall change our vile body . . ."

We are striving, then, to be citizens of heaven, of Zion, of that city to come "whose builder and maker is God." Nor, are we alone

in this struggle, for the faithful from the beginning of God's creation have sought to be citizens of heaven, children of God, looking for the coming of the Messiah to establish Zion.

If we, as they, are struggling to be citizens of heaven, we are to be in this world, then, sojourners, pilgrims, those passing through. In this struggle, we have much help, much example. In Hebrews 11 : 9-10 we read of Abraham :

“By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a *strange* country, dwelling in tabernacles . . . For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

Nor, was Abraham alone in this hope—nor are we, for we read further, verses 13-16 :

“These all died in faith . . . and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country . . . they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly ; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God : for he hath prepared for them a city.”

Can we realise the blessing, that God should prepare for His people a city, if by their living they can show that they long for such a city.

What a glorious city it will be—this Zion of God—the hope and inspiration of every faithful child of God since the beginning of His creation.

#### “A SONG FOR THE SONS OF KORAH”

To help us appreciate the glory of this city and the blessings to be granted *to* those who are in truth its citizens, we are privileged to read today the 87th Psalm. It is the outpouring of David's heart as he contemplates the blessing in store in this city for God's children. It is entitled, “A Psalm or Song for the sons of Korah.” We find the word “*Korah*” to mean “crystal” or “ice”—that which is clear, transparent, sparkling, with nothing hidden. How well this describes those who are struggling to be worthy of the heavenly citizenship, who are agonizing to be pure, to serve God from a pure heart with love unfeigned. This Psalm, then, is a song for the sons of Korah, for those who are struggling to be clear as crystal. If it is for such, what is its purpose for them ? It is to strengthen, to encourage, to keep strong the vision, the glory of the City of God. David tells us in verses 2 and 3 :

“The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwell-

ings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God."

God's heart, God's eyes are toward His city, toward those whose allegiance is to Him, toward those who have vowed to serve Him alone, toward those who are to be citizens of this city. To such, glorious things are, indeed, spoken—promised—for this is their hope. David, then, writes, "Selah"—"value it, considering the end." He helps us to greatly esteem this citizenship of Zion, to forsake what may lead to temporal advantage or honour and to serve the King, the Lord God of Zion.

If we do, indeed, value that city, Zion, will we not be thinking of it, longing for its establishment in the earth, putting aside that which belongs to this earth, this country? As we value it, we will want to be sure we know how we can become citizens of Zion.

The Psalm helps, verse 4 :

"I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me : behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia ; this man was born there."

These were great countries at the time of David ; it was an honour and a privilege to be born in and so citizens of such famous cities. How much more so with Zion as verse 5 tells us :

"And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her : and the highest himself shall establish her."

Born of Zion, born of God, born of the Spirit—such are the citizens of Zion ; such have the hope of Zion ; such look longingly for that city " whose builder and maker is God." This is the city which the Highest, Himself, shall establish. This sets Zion apart from all other cities—from Babylon, Tyre, Egypt, Ethiopia, U.S.A., Britain, or any other city or nation ; for it is established of God. It is *His* city, prepared by Him, made up of those who now seek to please Him, and who will be assembled to give Him glory and honour for ever.

How we long to be part of that assembly, that city established by God. We, brethren and sisters, marvel that we have been called to be part of it. Now, however, is our time of probation, the time when God watches us, tries us, chastens us to see whether *our* heart is fastened upon Zion, whether we love the gates of Zion more than any other city, whether we are truly valuing it as we consider the glorious end of His purpose with this city.

#### "THE LORD SHALL COUNT"

Further help is found in this Song for the Sons of crystal, in verse 6 :

“The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah.”

To *count*, we find, means to declare, to write, to tell, giving the thought of being marked so as to be identified with someone. And, God does this for us, as He has always done for those striving to be faithful. An example can be found in Ezekiel 9 : 2, where we read of God’s judgment upon unfaithful Jerusalem :

“And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate . . . and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand ; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer’s (one who counts) inkhorn by his side . . . And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of . . . Jerusalem and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.”

These marked upon the foreheads were those who cared for Zion, who struggled to be its citizens, those who wept because God was dishonoured and His city defiled. These were saved from death at the hands of those who came from God with the slaughter weapon in their hands.

This example helps us, brethren and sisters, in our struggle to be among those identified with Zion, the blessed of God. To be so marked, we, too, must experience the heartfelt grief for the evil we see done against God ; we must struggle to give Him the glory and honour due unto His name. If we can enlarge our spirits in this way, then we can hope to be marked, unmistakably identified with God and His Son, citizens of His Holy City, and counted among those who will be saved from death, ever rejoicing in His mercy.

David, who lived each day in this hope, tells us that the Lord will count such “when he writeth up the people.” What does this mean ? Help can be found in Revelation 21 : 27 :

“ . . . there shall in no wise enter into it (heavenly Jerusalem, Zion) any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie : *but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.*”

Written up in the book of life, counted as citizens of Zion—only these will be allowed the blessing of an entrance into that city : reserved from the beginning. Many others will have been blotted out of the book of life because of a failure to obey and serve the King of Zion. An example of such is found in Ezekiel 13 : 8-9 :

“Therefore . . . behold I am against you, saith the Lord God. And mine hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity,

and that divine lies : they shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel ; and ye shall know that I am the Lord God.”

These can never be citizens of Zion. Their longing was not for Him, and so God is against them.

Brethren and sisters, our fervent prayer is that we may be written among those that are born there—people of Zion. It is also our struggle, for it takes an agonising to get the victory over our flesh. Again the Spirit speaks, “Selah.” If we do, indeed, value this hope, looking to the end soon to be accomplished with the return of Christ, we will struggle the harder to overcome ; we will be watchful ; we will help each other, striving to view the present world as our Father does ; and we will in our smallest ways, try to give Him honour and realise how weak, indeed, we are. We remember the Spirit’s message for us in Revelation 3 : 5 :

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment ; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.”

J. A. DeF.

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## Christendom — *and others* — Astray

*The Spirit of the Law the Spirit of Christ*

**“NOW THESE ARE THE JUDGMENTS WHICH THOU SHALT SET BEFORE THEM.”** (Exodus 21 : 1)

### Objections Answered :

**I**T would seem superfluous to state that the people of God are given His judgments, that they may be able to “judge righteous judgment”, in *all* doctrine. And, let us remember that doctrine not only includes all aspects of belief, but everything that constitutes our personal and ecclesial life.

In the endeavour to make the Truth shine clearly, unclouded by any shades of apostasy, it is imperative to show that departure

from the Faith in any particular, involves departure from Christ and the loss of all hope unless there is repentance.

The millions of Christendom would immediately deny such a proposition, preferring their own opinions to the judgments of God.

The children of God know the worthlessness of human opinions, of "philosophy and vain deceit", and delight themselves in the Law of the Lord, so that they are not tossed about like flotsam and jetsam on the murky waters of a troubled sea, having neither guidance nor direction.

As stated in the first article of this series, passages of Scripture are used by those who once had the Truth claiming that those withdrawn from, are not necessarily cut off from Christ and without hope. To suggest that departure from the Faith does not involve separation from Christ, is obviously an affront to commonsense even as it is unscriptural. Support is given to this very wrong view by still addressing those who have been withdrawn from as "brethren", and sending them "greetings", giving the impression that they, and those joined to them still belong to Christ and as such have hope. The following passage of Scripture is used to bolster up this false idea :

**"YET I HAVE LEFT ME SEVEN THOUSAND IN ISRAEL, ALL THE KNEES WHICH HAVE NOT BOWED UNTO BAAL."**

(I. Kings 19 : 18)

May we now examine impartially this Scripture, and see whether it does give any support to the idea that those who have departed from the Faith, may still have Christ and the hope which this provides.

The line of reasoning used is something like this : That Elijah the prophet was unaware of a faithful remnant in apostate Israel, and so at the present day there may be some who are unknown but are faithful.

The next step in the wrong thinking is both misleading and subtle. That those who *are* known and have departed from the Faith, may yet be accounted as faithful by Christ.

Obviously, such a proposition has nothing to do with the assurance given to Elijah that there were still some left in the kingdom of Israel, who were a faithful remnant.

Consideration has already been given to the two different ways God deals with apostasy.

In the Kingdom, rebellion was dealt with summarily. Punishment in varying degrees was inflicted until there was a cry for deliverance. By this means, Israel was purified of apostasy more than once.

Under the New Covenant, when the Kingdom is no longer in existence, apostasy is to be dealt with by purging out from the Ecclesias those who are rebels. We need not repeat the commands in the New Testament based on the Spirit of the Law, which require the purging out of error, compared to leaven; a most powerful figure, to show that unless this is done the whole will become leavened. And does not the history of the Truth in the early and the latter days give ample confirmation, that this is absolutely true as seen in the sad fate of those who have ignored this divine counsel.

The assurance given to Elijah that there was still a faithful remnant in the nation of Israel, when he felt destitute as he fled from the land, must be considered on the basis of how God dealt with apostasy in the time of the Kingdom. Elijah would know this and so should we.

A further extension of the false reasoning, claiming that the unfaithful may have hope, is given by reference to the quotation which the Apostle Paul makes of the same words spoken to Elijah :

**“EVEN SO THEN AT THIS PRESENT TIME ALSO THERE IS A REMNANT.”** (Romans 11 : 5).

Ah ! say the many who wish to give the unfaithful hope, here it is—a remnant in the time of the Apostle just as it was in the days of Elijah.

Without detailed examination it must be obvious that the unfaithful cannot have hope, and to give the impression that he has, is a denial of God and His Word.

The Truth will stand the most detailed examination. Let us look at the context of the words used by the Apostle, and then we shall see that to use them to support the idea that those who have departed from the Faith may still have hope, is entirely wrong as common sense would dictate.

The context is as follows :

“But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.  
I say then, Hath God cast away his people ? God forbid.  
God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.”  
(Romans 10 : 21).

Then the Apostle goes on to quote the words spoken to Elijah to prove what he had said that God had not cast away Israel in the

time of Elijah ; even as He had not cast away Israel, or the Jews, who embraced the Truth in his day.

This brings us to look at what the Apostle Paul has to say, respecting the position of Israel or the Jews at the time when he spoke these words.

It is perhaps impossible for us fully to realise what the change from the Old Covenant to the New, meant to the Jews, who were steeped in tradition. Although many could see that Jesus was the Christ and were impressed with the Truth spoken in His name, they nevertheless clung tenaciously to the works of the Law. So strong was this feeling, and such a hindrance to the work of the Apostles, that in order to make it clear that the works of the Law were no longer to be carried out, a great Ecclesial meeting was arranged to take place at Jerusalem, to consider the matter.

The divinely recorded minutes of this meeting are impressive :

“Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, ye must be circumcised, and keep the law : to whom we gave no such commandment.

It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul.

For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things.

That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication : from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.” (Acts 15 : 24/29).

But tradition dies hard, and will be upheld by those who are devoid of the Spirit of the Truth even at the expense of their own salvation, as the record shows :

“Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you : but seeing ye put it from you, and *judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life*, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.”  
(Acts 13 : 46).

Here, the careful mind will note that departure from the Faith means departure from God and His Son and the loss of life which this promises.

The gentle and beseeching spirit of the Apostle Paul was not unmindful of the strong pull which the Jews felt towards the works

of the Law. So much so that he said in the same letter to the Romans :

“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit.

For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

Who are Israelites ; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises.

That is, They which are the children of the flesh, These are not the children of God : but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” (Romans 9 : 1, 3/8).

It is most clear that the Apostle Paul was anxious to remove the false accusation which had been made against him, that there was no hope for the Jews because he taught that the works of the Law were no longer required to be carried out. Some Jews heard. Some Jews believed, and embraced the Truth as it is in Jesus. To make clear that all Jews had not been cast off, although the Apostle Paul was required to show that the works of the Law had ceased, he declares the words which we are considering.

“Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.” (Romans 11 : 5).

In spite of the strong feeling amongst the Jews against the Apostle, because he taught the works of the Law had ceased, there were many Jews who did come to the Truth. These were few, in comparison with the many in the nation of Judah, but as the Apostle says they constituted a “remnant according to the election of grace.” This election was of faith, and not based upon the works of the Law which most of the Jews, because of their bigotry, failed to appreciate.

In the subsequent discourse of the Apostle Paul, he refers to those who belonged to God as the branches of the olive tree. Apostasy had caused the Jewish branches to be broken off, and the Gentiles, whom the Apostle describes as belonging to the wild olive tree, were “grafted” into the good olive tree, which as the Apostle Paul points out, is contrary to nature.

To emphasise that all Jews had not been cast away, but could partake of the blessings in Christ, he says :

“And they also, if they *abide not still in unbelief*, shall be grafted in : for God is able to graft them in again.

For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree : how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree ?

And so all Israel shall be saved." (Romans 11 : 23/26).

An unbiased consideration of the words spoken to Elijah at Horeb, and used by the Apostle Paul to show that at a time of crisis in the Truth, there was still a remnant, does not give the slightest license for suggesting that those who have departed from the Faith, may still have hope. May the reader take a careful look at the last words quoted, and see what is the position of those who abide in "unbelief"—cut off from the good olive tree, cut off from salvation.

Really one ought not to have needed to write so much on so simple a matter, but on account of the misuse of the words spoken to Elijah and used by the Apostle, it is important to show to those of the *others* who are disturbed, that there is no refuge provided by these words in thinking that those who have departed from the Faith in any particular, may still have hope, and that judgment of these must be left until the return of Christ.

( . . . to be continued )

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## The Titles of the Psalms

**"SPEAKING UNTO YOURSELVES IN PSALMS . . . MAKING MELODY IN YOUR HEART UNTO THE LORD."** (Ephesians 5 : 19).

### Psalm 37

*A Psalm of David*

**D**AVID was a musician. His inspired words accompanied by suitable tunes earned for him the title of the "sweet psalmist of Israel." His playing upon an instrument was such that it had a most soothing effect. Doubtless uplifting to the spiritual mind. It even succeeded temporarily in quelling the fury of Saul. Three thousand years have passed, and although we have no idea of the tunes to which the Psalms were sung, in the kindness of God, the words are preserved so that through them we might be able to make a melody in our hearts unto the Lord.

**"FRET NOT THYSELF BECAUSE OF EVILDOERS"** (verse 1)

When faith is weak there is a temptation to look at the lot of some in the world, and feel that they are better off. Their happiness, their prosperity for a time seems so real, and without the trials and difficulties through which the children of God must pass. If these thoughts are allowed to occupy the heart, then faith will be quenched. All the beauties and glories associated with the Truth will become dim, and there will be a danger of perishing.

A little care, a little thought such as the Psalm provides helps us to view these matters in correct perspective.

"Neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.  
For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither  
as the green herb.

For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be ; yea, thou  
shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be."

(verses 1/2 and 10).

How foolish it is to be mesmerised by what appears to be the happy and prosperous life of the wicked, for as the Psalm so clearly shows, their happiness and mirth will soon be quieted in the dark and cold tomb, never to be heard any more. Indeed, although they might seem to have all that the heart could desire, soon they come to be "like sheep . . . laid in the grave,"—as dead as mutton.

**"DELIGHT THYSELF ALSO IN THE LORD."** (verse 4)

"Delight thyself also in the Lord ; and he shall give thee the  
desires of thine heart."

All the schemes and ambitions of men have a very limited horizon. This is realised by many making them say that life is sad. All realise they must die, and that their most cherished dreams will soon be stilled in death.

How glorious is the contrast for those who delight themselves in the Lord. Life for them is full of anticipation. Death to them is no more than a brief interruption of the realisation of their desires if they have been faithful.

Meanwhile, the heart can vibrate with the glorious melody that such thoughts induce, for even now there will be experienced an earnest of that salvation which God in His mercy has promised. "He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." There is none in the Truth who has not experienced this in his lifetime on many occasions. Many brethren must feel ever grateful that through the kindness of their God they have not been caught in the "net" of the nations to which they belong, bringing untold suffering to themselves

and to their families. This is but one of the delights which will make the heart pulsate with gladness.

May some of the comforting chords in the concluding part of the Psalm fill the heart :

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord : and he delighteth in his way.

I have been young, and now am old ; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land : when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.” (verses 23, 25, 35).

Here is an exultant melody which will cause the heart of the righteous to rejoice as the certainty of what God has promised is realised.

To appreciate the melody, to have it in the heart, it is necessary to be in tune with the One who has inspired the words of the Psalm. This requires, as the verses just quoted show, that there should be a submission so that life does not become one of personal choice, but is subject to being “ordered by the Lord”. This requires patience and faith which will be abundantly rewarded for those who “wait on the Lord”.

( . . . to be continued )

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## Cremation

### *A Denial of the Resurrection*

**I**T was a shock to see in the *Dawn* Christadelphian Magazine, a report that one of their members who had died had been cremated. This seems so inimical and repulsive to the belief that Jesus is soon to return and will raise the dead. Supposing that He had come the day after the cremation had taken place. What would He have said to those who claim to believe that Jesus is “the resurrection and the life.” ?

The arguments of science will show that it makes no difference to the ultimate dissolution of the body whether this takes place in the ground or in the furnace of the Crematorium. We are not concerned, however, with the arguments of science but with the spirit of Truth. No faithful mind would ever have thought that it would

have been appropriate for Jesus or Lazarus to have been cremated. The faith of Martha and Mary in Jesus being the "resurrection and the life", would have been completely negated had Lazarus' corpse been burnt instead of being buried.

We understand from those who have attended a Committal at a Crematorium, they feel that it is a tribute to the god of science but not to the God of heaven.

It was Sir Henry Thompson, who showed that a reverberating furnace could reduce a body or corpse weighing a hundred and forty four pounds in fifty minutes to about four pounds of lime dust. Grinding of the calcined bones is necessary after the burning.

There are some things which one immediately feels to be wrong and opposed to Truth, and cremation is one of them. The Encyclopaedia Britannica says :

"There can be little doubt that the practice of cremation in modern Europe was at first stopped, and thereafter prevented in great measure, by the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body."

The lively hope of the Truth is based upon the resurrection of the body. First that of Jesus, and then of all those who are responsible to His judgment. So important is this doctrine and paramount that to subvert it by burning a corpse instead of placing it in the grave, must appear dreadful in the eyes of Him who said, "I have the keys of the grave and of death." A grave does not exist for those whose bodies have been cast to the flames. What a travesty of *the Truth* ! How startling is the indictment of the Spirit :

"Thus saith the Lord : For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof ; *because he burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime.* But I will send a fire upon Moab." (Amos 2 : 1/2).

The thoughtful, the dutiful, will realise that these words settle completely whether cremation is permissible or not ; that it is a denial of the blessed doctrine of the resurrection from the grave.

The great power and beauty of the Truth is expressed by Paul :

"But I would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning them which are *asleep*, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which *sleep* in Jesus will God bring with him."

(I. Thessalonians 4 : 13/14).

What a wonderful figure is natural sleep expressing the condition of those who “*sleep* in Jesus”. During sound sleep, there is no consciousness until awaked. This helps us appreciate the lot of those who “die in the Lord.” They are unconscious, and *sleep* awaiting the call of the Lord from heaven, who will awaken them out of *sleep*, for “the dead in Christ shall rise.”

To lay a body in the grave honours this beautiful figure, fortifies faith in the resurrection and fills the heart with the hope of coming from the *sleep* of death.

Burning the dead, grinding their bones, as is the case in cremation, destroys completely the beauty and hope expressed in the divine figure that those who “die in the Lord”—“*sleep* in Jesus.”

As if to show the utter hopelessness of those who were vile they were not only to be put to death, but their bodies were to be burnt with fire (Leviticus 21 : 9). This would show to the Hebrew brethren and sisters that there was no hope of a resurrection for these. Frequently throughout the Scriptures, those who are hated of God are seen to have been destroyed by fire.

As Lot looked back on Sodom and Gomorrah, and saw brimstone and fire come down from heaven destroying the cities, he must have been impressed that the wickedness of the inhabitants of these places was so great, that there was no future hope for them at all.

In the days of Moses when certain in Israel rose up against him, and two hundred and fifty princes who were famous in the congregation, “men of renown”, dared to offer incense, “fire came out from the Lord, and consumed them.” Again, this would show to thoughtful minds that there was no hope in the case of these to a resurrection of life.

Similarly, with regard to those Bodies which have left the Truth, Jesus says, they will be “cast into a lake of fire.”

Could the divine message be clearer that the destruction of the dead by fire is indicative of a divine judgment showing that there is no possibility of a resurrection to life ; agreeable to the feelings of those who sincerely believe in the resurrection, that when the body is laid in the grave, there it is at rest, asleep, until He comes.

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

**“BEHOLD, I WILL MAKE JERUSALEM A CUP OF TREMBLING UNTO ALL THE PEOPLE ROUND ABOUT, WHEN THEY SHALL BE IN THE SIEGE BOTH AGAINST JUDAH AND AGAINST JERUSALEM.”** (Zechariah 12 : 2).

**O**N May 14th, 1948, the British Mandate for Palestine ended at midnight, and the Jews proclaimed the new State of Israel. Little did the British realise at the time what their withdrawal would mean.

Now, 22 years later, Israel is strong, and recently celebrated the anniversary of its independence with a display of a missile-equipped gunboat flotilla. There was also a flypast of Phantom fighter-bombers with a ground spectacle of armour and artillery.

The sea-to-sea Gabriel missiles, on public view for the first time, were seen by thousands of people as six French-built gunboats sailed from Haifa to Tel-Aviv. The missiles which are Israeli developed make the gunboats superior to those deployed by the Egyptians.

The Prime Minister of Israel, who was at a Jerusalem celebration, said that Israel's joy could not be complete because of continuing hostilities, and declared, “We shall stand fast because this is the place, this is the homeland, and there is no other. This we shall defend.”

Israel's determination is evidenced in the unprecedented trade deficit caused by the importation of raw materials for defence industries ; which means that America in time will not be asked for so many weapons. Nor will there be the same dependence on other countries such as France, as was the case in the past. Immigration also continues on the brisk scale of 45,000 a year, with a high proportion of this number coming from Western countries, bringing with them many skills and ideas. The only limiting factor this year is that houses cannot be built quickly enough. In all the 22 years that have elapsed since the commencement of Jewish independence Israel has never been stronger, materially, militarily or in morale. But peace seems to be more remote than ever. Nevertheless great enthusiasm to build continues unabated. Wherever a visitor to Israel goes, he sees men with pneumatic drills at work, erecting, paving or clearing waste land.

To the world at large, and particularly to the great power blocs,

Israel and the circumstances surrounding its establishment and continuance, presents an extreme political problem. Russia pours arms into Egypt, and America reacts by warning Russia that if this continues then Israel will get American arms that have been withheld for the purpose of dampening the sparks that might ignite a third Israel-Arab war, with all the implications that would mean. Every time the border incidents warm up into large scale clashes the world wonders whether another major action is about to take place with the possibility of world power confrontation.

So the prophecy of Zechariah is beginning to come to pass. "Jerusalem (is becoming) a cup of trembling unto all the people round about", and the situation is to be far more grave for the nations as the time goes on. Israel declared that she will never give up Jerusalem, and also seems committed in policy to holding the Golan Heights, which reach to Mount Hermon taken from Syria in 1967.

Where other territories are concerned, such as Sinai, it seems that Israel might be prepared to withdraw if the Arabs proved themselves reasonable. But there is no evidence that the Arabs will ever be reasonable without suppression; and they have a certain diplomatic lever that protects them against large scale western interference because of their great oil resources upon which many western nations are largely dependent. Also the help of Russia keeps them in a more intransigent mood. Russia of course is not helping Arabs because she loves them; it is an imperialistic attitude that motivates her. The gradual extension of northern influence in the south was again hinted at recently when a small news item reported that the Emperor of Ethiopia had arrived in Moscow for talks with Russian leaders. He flew from Japan where he had been visiting Expo 70. About the time of his visit it was reported that the four-Power talks at the United Nations were as far away from an agreed solution on the Middle East crisis as they have ever been. A meeting of French, British, Russian and American Ambassadors which was described as "crucial" failed to make any progress according to one source of information.

But if world powers cannot agree neither can the Arabs amongst themselves, though all share a common hatred of Israel. Syria's closure of the American-owned Trans-Arabia Pipeline has caused ill feelings. It was reported that a bulldozer had caused damage to the pipeline in Syrian territory but Syria had refused to allow a repair gang to put the matter right. As a result Saudi-Arabia, which is losing oil revenue because of this, threatens to cut off war payments to Jordan and Egypt. A rumour circulating suggests that the Syrian government is working to extract "protection money" from

Saudi-Arabia. Iraq is also showing opposition to the Saudi monarchy by means of hostile propaganda. It appears as though the underlying reason for such differences amongst the Arab countries is the probable Saudi dislike for the President of Egypt and his tendency to barter away Egyptian Sovereignty to the Soviet Union. It has been said that the United Arab Republic has in fact two rulers, the Egyptian President, and the Russian Ambassador, described as the most brilliant of all the Soviet diplomats, a man of great cunning and intelligence.

Arabia therefore does not appear to be prepared to allow the Egyptian leader to take over the leadership of the Arab world as a tool of Russia. Of course such dissensions help Israel.

The thought that springs to mind in considering Israel's position and achievements on the 22nd anniversary of her establishment is that the more prosperous and strong the nation becomes the more tempting she will be as a prize to the Northern Imperialistic Power. During the first twenty years of its existence, Israel's Gross National Product grew at an average annual rate of nine per cent, greater than the United States, or even West Germany during the same period. In assessing the various factors that make up the Gross National Product it is found that Israel's economy is tending towards that of an industrial nation. In 1968 industry accounted for twenty-six per cent of the G.N.P. as compared to eight per cent represented by agriculture. Israel's economy then is reaching a high state of activity and is placing her on a level with the developed nations of the world. Industrial production actually grew in the years 1968-69 by an average annual rate of twenty-five per cent. During these two years the total expenditure on gross investments increased at the annual rate of thirty per cent, and now investments in industry alone are expected to grow by more than forty-five per cent. Yet despite the rapid increase in activity the country has managed to maintain stability in prices and wages.

This has facilitated, particularly in industry, an increase in exports. In 1968 exports rose by twenty five per cent and in 1969 by an estimated additional twelve per cent. As a result exports will amount to one and a quarter billion dollars annually as compared to two hundred million only ten years ago. Israel has expanded its markets to include Africa and Asia as well as Europe and North America. Here then is a small country with a great potential, a country that will eventually attract the Imperial power to make moves to take it over by force. But in that day, as the prophecy of Zechariah so graphically portrays :

“ . . . though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it . . . ”  
they “shall be cut in pieces.” (Zechariah 12 : 3).

Therefore as the mind reviews the position of world powers concerned with the Middle East situation at the present time, it becomes evident in the light of Scripture that in their interfering and manouering they are only burdening themselves with something that will eventually lead to their destruction. They are weighing themselves down with something they cannot carry, or solve, because the problem is one in which God and His purpose are directly involved. The Middle East actually is a dangerous fuse which the nations are getting more apprehensive about. Jerusalem in particular is one of the focal points of trouble because the Arabs purport to have a religious claim for regaining the old city, and western religions are also involved in having respective representation there in their ancient churches and grottoes.

The world's attention then is being caused to dwell upon the tiny nation of Israel and her capital, even though there are many troubles elsewhere. What they see is causing "trembling unto all the people" in fulfilment of the ancient prophecy.

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 : Midweek, Forestville, Buffalo, Hamburg and Orchard Park. Alternate week : Revelation Study.

As the witness continues with those who have fallen away from the Truth, there seems little response either here or in England. Yet, with the return of the Lord Jesus so clearly near, the command is to speak "whether they hear or forbear" in the desire to be faithful witnesses of the Light of the Gospel.

Violence, warfare, crime, inflation, perplexity increase on every side—pointing to the soon return of the Son of God. Our prayer is for help to endure until He comes in the hope of that salvation promised from the beginning.

Word is still awaited in the case of our Brother Steiger's draft situation. Supplications of all on his behalf have been heard, and we are grateful for the fellowshiping of this trial.

J.A.DeF.

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*NEWTOWNARDS, CO. DOWN, Northern Ireland.*

Breaking of Bread, Sunday 11-0 a.m.  
Sunday School 2-0 p.m.  
Bible Class Wednesday (Revelation Study alternate weeks)

We were grateful to be given the opportunity to attend the lecture to Christadelphians in Leicester last month. With a subject so vital to them it is to be regretted that of those invited so few now consider it any matter of urgency whether they possess the "wedding garment" (Matthew 23) or not. We pray that those present may be moved to reconsider their position as being outside the One Body of The Lord Jesus, and therefore without hope, while they so remain.

One is almost invariably surprised when such contacts as these are made, to find that the attitude of the visitor is less a seeking to be put right, than an attempt to justify what they readily admit to be wrong in their body !

We pray that some may be drawn to see that the One Faith can

only be a united Faith, with Christ undivided. We were again grateful for that unity in counsel with the brethren in Manchester and from the States, during our visit.

J.P.

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*MANCHESTER*: Memorial Hall, M.A.P.S. Building, Albert Sq., Manchester.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread, 11-30 a.m. Lecture, 3-30 p.m. Tuesdays: Bible Class, 7-15 p.m., Onward Hall, Deansgate.

Bible Classes are now held on Tuesdays instead of Thursdays.

The theme for the Lectures this month is: "The final Election soon, lasting for all time without raising false hopes." It was thought that this might be a topical subject arousing interest in minds disillusioned by current politics, and the failure of elections to provide a realisation of cherished hopes.

The brethren and sisters are looking forward to the arrival of the two visitors from the States on Saturday, August 1st. This will undoubtedly provide a means of binding members of the family together who at the present time are scattered abroad.

W.V.B.

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*BLACK ROCK, Pentrip, Portmadoc.*

Sundays: Breaking of Bread, 11-30 a.m.  
Revelation Study: Mid-week.

As the summer season has commenced once again, we have been pleased to have the company of the first party of visitors—Bro. and Sis. W. V. Butterfield and Sister Beryl.

We appreciated the help received on May 17, and May 20th.

On May 31st, we were visited by Bro. J. Smith and Bro. and Sis. Pulman and Sis. Marion Laidlaw.

With travelling becoming more difficult, we appreciate these visits, and now look forward to our next visitors and also those from America.

per J.S.