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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

“LACKED YE ANY THING ?”

**T**HE WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS often seem to fill a particular need. This is not without purpose, for He spoke as moved by the Spirit, to teach, to help His brethren, to fill the needs of those who seek to follow Him in every age. For example, in Luke 22 : 35, Jesus asked His disciples :

“ . . . When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing ?”

Their answer was, “Nothing”. Can we believe this ? That there is no real lack to those who are struggling to follow Jesus, who want to say “No !” to their flesh, crucifying it with its lusts ?

Let us look back to the situation of which Jesus speaks when He sent His followers out without purse, scrip or shoes. We find the record in Matthew 10 : 1-10 :

“ . . . when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness . . . ”

These Jesus sent forth and instructed, verses 7 and 8 :

“And as ye go, preach . . . Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils . . . ”

They were sent to a work, a witnessing, to use the power of the Spirit given to them ; not for themselves, but for the help of others and for the glory of God. Jesus, further, said, verses 9 and 10 :

“Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip ( a pouch to carry food), neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves : for the workman is worthy of his meat.”

*We* might feel, how foolish to go on a journey, a work, without money in our pockets, food, shoes (how can I walk without shoes), nor a staff for support ; nor two coats (suppose it rains and one gets wet). When we go on a journey, we like to be prepared—well prepared. Yet, Jesus said to go without all these things that one would depend upon. They did too, and from their answer to Jesus' question, it is obvious that they *did not* lack. Why was there no lack ? In going about the work of the Truth, does not God provide? As Jesus said, “The workman is worthy of his meat.” If, then, brethren and sisters, we are truly workmen, pleasing to God, will He not provide for *our* every need ? Yet, how difficult it is to put our trust in Him; believing He *can* and *will* provide. It involves faith, a willingness to be ready to be “sent” when He so indicates.

How strengthened and encouraged those twelve disciples must have felt as they listened to Jesus' words.

**"FREELY HAVE YE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE"**

Their Lord reminded them, Matthew 10 : 8 :

" . . . freely ye have received, freely give."

"Freely", we find, comes from a word meaning "a gift". Upon these brethren the power of God's Spirit had been bestowed, enabling them to heal, to cleanse, to raise the dead, to minister as God's workmen. They lived in the hope of Israel, the promise of salvation through the Messiah, the anointed of God, and He was there before them, speaking to them, encouraging them in the work. Truly, they had freely received, for God had bestowed much upon them. The greatest gift of all was the man, Jesus, who was the Christ of God by obedience to His Father's will.

We, brethren and sisters, do not have the capacity to literally raise the dead, to heal, to cleanse ; but are we not given divine power to do so spiritually—in ourselves first, and then as we grow, demonstrating our faith, we are helped with others, helped to give of the gift we have received of the Spirit He bestows. In I. Corinthians 2 : 9-12, we read of this :

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit . . .

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God ; that we might know the things that are *freely given* to us of God."

The things that are of the Spirit of God : the unbelievable force which transforms and is so real and practical as to change lives from absolute helplessness and sorrow, to light, and works with purpose and joy. This is what was so freely given to those twelve disciples. The same gifts are freely given to us, brethren and sisters. Do we freely give as we have so fully received ? Do we heal the sick, giving the practical and spiritual help that strengthens those who may be weak or failing the same help that we have received ? We know "the spirit of the world". It is, for the most part, evil, selfish, seeking only its own. The spirit that is of God is not like that, but helps us in the struggle to be selfless, putting away our own wishes and needs. It enables us to heal and comfort the sick, sick in heart and spirit. It enables us to show the cleansing power of God over this defiled flesh. By it, we can help those seeking

Truth, giving hope and healing to those dead in trespasses and sin. Paul was able to speak from his own experiences ; he had received much, beginning as the Truth was shown to him on the way to Damascus. In gratitude for all that this conversion had brought, he freely gave of his time, his strength, his means, of himself for his brethren, for the Jews, for the Gentiles who were seeking the way of Truth. How many Paul healed ; how many he cleansed ; how many he raised from the dead ! Does his example help us, then, to follow the admonition of the Lord Jesus : "freely give". Can we see, brethren and sisters, why those disciples answered Jesus' question so directly, so simply, "Nothing". Indeed, there is no lack to those who are seeking before all else to honour God.

**"SHE OF HER PENURY HATH CAST IN ALL THE LIVING"**

In this connection, we think of the poor widow, Luke 21 : 1-4 :  
"(Jesus) saw also a certain widow casting in two mites. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all . . . she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had."

She of her lack (as the word penury means) cast into the treasury. Her spirit was to freely give, not counting the cost, for she must have believed she would not lack. Because of this spirit, we know she received a great blessing, the commendation of the Lord Jesus. If she had stopped to count the cost, to wonder from where tomorrow's food might come, would she have cast in "all her living"? Was she not saying to God that she lacked nothing, although she was so poor. We can profit by her example, brethren and sisters, by her faith in God's provision—her faith that the "workman is worthy of his meat."

When we look back over the experiences of our brethren of old, we find that none of those lacked who in faith obeyed God. We have read much of David in our recent portions. At times, it appeared that he did lack ; yet, in all things, God cared for him. II. Samuel 22 : 1 :

". . . David spake unto the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul."

God did truly deliver David, but only after a time of testing. Yet, all during that probation, did David lack anything ? He realized his great blessing, verse 2 and 3 :

". . . The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; the God of my rock ; in him will I trust : he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation . . ."

Also, verses 17-20 :

“He sent from above, he took me ; he drew me out of many waters . . . he delivered me, because he delighted in me.”

These words may sound to be proud or boastful ; but we know the spirit of David. He knew blessing and deliverance could only come as God was pleased with him. As he perceived how God freely delivered, David, then, freely gave of himself to God, and to God’s people, bringing delight to God.

We think, too, of Jeremiah. We have read his prayer as he bought that field in Anathoth. The field was under the dominion of Nebuchadrezzar, who had conquered all of Judah, and was at that moment laying seige to Jerusalem. Jeremiah was in prison because of his witnessing that Nebuchadrezzar would conquer Jerusalem. Yet, at God’s instruction, Jeremiah bought the field from Hanameel as a sign to Judah that the captivity would end, and that field and houses and vineyards would again be possessed in Judah. Let us listen to Jeremiah’s prayer, Jeremiah 32 : 17 :

“Ah Lord God ! Behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee.”

Jeremiah was quick to acknowledge that he and Israel had freely received that they lacked nothing. Yet, how few there were in Israel who heard the oft-repeated warnings of God as He sent Jeremiah and other prophets to them. How much Jeremiah suffered at their hands, imprisoned, threatened with death, despised as a traitor ; yet, truly he lacked nothing and was quick to acknowledge it to God.

Will we ever lack, brethren and sisters, if we, as Jeremiah, believe of God that “there is nothing too hard for thee.” ? If we do lack, must we not acknowledge that the lack is of ourselves ? Does it not help us, then, to think about our responsibilities as we read Jesus’ words, “freely have ye received, freely give.” ? When we see a need in our brethren or sisters, do we *want* to fill it, to freely give ? As we may see the brethren, who have the responsibility for the oversight, heavily laden, *do we freely give to help, to lift some of the load*, certainly being most anxious not to add to it. Do we remember the words of the Lord Jesus to those at His right hand at the judgment seat, Matthew 25 : 40 :

“ . . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

Is this the spirit of freely giving ?

If we can move in this spirit, brethren and sisters, if we can be aware and feel that each of us has a great responsibility to the Body and to God, we, too, can answer Jesus' question, "lacked ye any thing?" simply, surely, gratefully, "Nothing". It is just one word, but what a meaning it conveys to Him who is watching our spiritual growth!

Does not this quicken us to "freely give"?

J. A. DeF.

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## Christendom — and others — Astray

*The Spirit of the Law the Spirit of Christ*  
*"The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people,*  
*above all people that are upon the face of the earth."*

(Deuteronomy 7 : 6).

### PART II.

**T**HE DOCTRINE OF FELLOWSHIP was discussed last month. A few additional remarks seem to be indicated. The importance of the doctrine cannot be exaggerated. It is a fence enclosing the upholders of the Truth. If allowed to be broken down, then the "boar out of the wood" will quickly enter; and that which was previously pure doctrine will become impure, and although the Truth may continue to be professed, it amounts to nothing more than having a "name that they live, but are dead."

If we look at the doctrine in the Law, it is simple to understand; simple to see its reasonableness, and the area it intends to cover.

Let us look!

If, as the Law states, Israel were to be a "special people, above all people that are upon the face of the earth"; what of all the others—the Egyptians, Canaanites and the rest? God was not the God of any other people—only of Israel. If He had been, would He have destroyed the power of Egypt and discredited their gods; would He have decreed that the seven nations in the land must be totally destroyed, because the "cup of their iniquity was full."?

This consideration places the doctrine of fellowship in divine perspective: that God is only the God of those whom He has chosen, and in no wise is the God of any other people, be they more strong and more numerous.

To have fellowship with God then, it is essential to belong to His chosen people ; and to be separate from all other peoples. This is implied in the Law :

“Ye shall be holy : for I the Lord your God am holy.”  
(Leviticus 19 : 2).

“Holy” simply means separation from all that is defiling, and contrary to God’s law, So important is this aspect of fellowship that the Spirit of Christ in the Law states :

“He (that) hath despised the word of the Lord . . . that soul shall be utterly cut off.” (Numbers 15 : 31.)

To the sentimental God’s commands on fellowship may seem harsh ; but God knows best. The sentimental may have a multitude of friends (for they never condemn anybody), but the sword of the Spirit brings certain death to such :

“Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God ? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the *enemy* of God.” (James 4 : 4).

Why is God so definite ? Why does His doctrine of fellowship seem so restrictive ? The answer is, as has already been seen, that this is the only way of preserving *the* Truth from apostasy—which means the loss of God, of hope, and of life.

Why was Joshua commanded to be so unfriendly to the inhabitants of the land ? “Unfriendly” is not the correct word, for God’s command was that all should be destroyed. Why should a God of love issue such an apparently cruel decree ? Because unless it were obeyed as the practical outcome of the doctrine of fellowship, *the* Truth would perish. A visit to Bochim at this juncture affords a salutary lesson :

“An angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swear unto your fathers ; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league (*the same meaning as fellowship*) with the inhabitants of this land ; ye shall throw down their altars : but ye have not obeyed my voice : *why have ye done this ?*

Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you ; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you.

And it came to pass, when the angel of the Lord spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice and wept.” (Judges 2 : 1-4).

Tears, many tears, which seemed to indicate repentance ; yet subsequent events showed that their repentance was only superficial. During the period of the Judges, the words of the Angel of God were forgotten ; apostasy took place, and in consequence grievous punishment came upon Israel. When brought down by affliction, and they cried for deliverance eventually God heard, for He is merciful. The lesson, however, is alarmingly clear. Leave God, and all the hope in His fellowship ceases.

The “others” have argued that because of the grievous sins of Israel, God will tolerate present evil in the Body. Nothing could be further from *the* Truth. Let it be realised that under the Old Covenant in the Land, purity of doctrine and fellowship was maintained by grievous punishments, which fell upon the unrighteous—the sword, famine and pestilence. To have lived in those times and argue that God was not so particular, would have soon brought the realisation that unless He had been particular, His precious Truth would have perished from the earth, and *all* (not just a few) of His people would have perished. And what is much worse is to realise that the hope of a future life, an eternal life of happiness and peace, would have vanished as a dream: Only a certain fearful looking for of judgment would have remained.

**THE CHIEF DESTROYER OF THE DOCTRINE OF FELLOWSHIP  
“ALL MEN ARE BRETHREN”**

The word “brother” has a sacred meaning. Jesus spoke of this clearly, when told that His brethren were without desiring to see Him. He said :

“*My brethren* are those which hear the word of God and do it.” (Luke 8 : 21).

So it must be utterly wrong and unscriptural to speak of those who deny the “wholesome doctrine” as “brethren”.

“Brethren” are only those “who hear the word of God and do it” ; the title “brother” is not just a New Testament courtesy as suggested by the late Editor of the “*Christadelphian*”, C. C. Walker. It is a salutation pregnant with divine meaning, and is the hallmark of fellowship.

The casual use by the “others” of the word “brother” has blinded their eyes to perceive this simple divine meaning.

Christendom view all peoples of whatever race or creed, as “brethren”. The falsity of this is seen in the work of some of the leading “divines”. The late Dean of Canterbury, sometimes referred to as the “Red Dean” travelled throughout the communist world, endeavouring to create a universal brotherhood based upon cam-

munist principles. Of course, he was well received by China, Russia and all communist states, who regarded him as a political pawn; just as he was a great political embarrassment to the western world. The title of his autobiography is significant: "Searching for the Light". Indeed, he spent a long life, and travelled thousands of miles in this quest but never confessed to have found the light. The fatal error of which he was not aware was, that God does not "call" all, and therefore all are not His children; neither are they "brethren".

The inexcusable use of "brother" in the days of Ahab brought about his death. Do let us be warned! Benhadad, the king of Syria had waged two great battles with Israel. Defeated on the hills, they thought that Israel's God was not in the valleys. So Benhadad returned with confidence, and with such a great army, that poor Israel appeared by comparison as "like two little flocks of kids". God spoke through His servant that though the Syrian multitude was so great, it would be delivered into the hands of Israel. When the battle was joined the mighty Syrian army was defeated, and no less than a hundred thousand slain. The king, Benhadad fled. Persuaded by his servants to go to Ahab and ask for mercy, they girded themselves in sack cloth and put ropes on their heads. When they came to the King Ahab, they were wily, ready to "observe whether anything would come from him, and did hastily catch it". The servants in their abjection said:

"Thy servant Benhadad saith, I pray thee, let me live. And he (Ahab) said, Is he yet alive? He is my *brother*."

(I. Kings 20 : 32).

This was quickly taken up. Its significance was understood immediately. God was angry that an enemy of His people should be so addressed, and spared. Ahab had no thought for what God had done in defeating the Syrians twice. No thought for the honour of God who had been blasphemed by such an infidel. Benhadad was an enemy of the Truth, and therefore in no sense a "brother" of the King of Israel. This false address to an enemy of God brought swift retribution. It was not long before Ahab was slain in battle by the same people God had helped him defeat—the Syrians.

Should there not be a warning in all this? In the doctrine of fellowship so clearly revealed in the Law, and the breaking of which by Ahab—by using the term "brother" to one who was opposed to God, brought about his death and great tribulation to Israel.

THE MIS-USE OF "BROTHER" BY THE "OTHERS"

Though divided into many sects, and permeated by many heresies, they are all regarded as "brethren", and addressed as such.

What must God think of such a travesty of the doctrine of fellowship!

The *Dawn* group are completely lost on the doctrine of fellowship. Not only do they speak of all the "others" as "brethren", but have gone so far as to say they are all in the Truth; and further they are not allowed to judge any man in the matter of salvation. Efforts to place these matters before the author of their publication, "Light and Shade of the Truth's History", have proved abortive. The author instead of facing up to the serious issue prefers to hide in some secret darkness from where he cannot be brought forth to face the light. It will be apparent to the discerning that in the case of the *Dawn* they are in much the same position as Christendom, unwilling and unable through ignorance of the doctrine of fellowship, to condemn anybody. Not that this is our object. But is it kindness to a person to allow him to perish, because of the fear of offending? Let the *Dawn* come to the light, and answer even for the sake of their own members who are utterly confused on the doctrine of fellowship.

Ahab made the fatal mistake of saying, an enemy and despiser of the truth was his "*brother*".

Many are they in the "others" who "consent not to the whole-some words of the Lord Jesus", and therefore are enemies of the Truth. Some claim:

That Adam was not the first man. Is he a "brother"?

That the creation was not accomplished in seven days. Is he a "brother"?

That some possess the Holy Spirit to the extent of speaking in a "tongue". Is he a "brother"?

That Jesus had not of our nature, thus denying the basis of the atonement. Is he a "brother"?

That the doctrine of fellowship does not require withdrawal from these, or those who sympathise with them. Is he a "brother"?

It will be evident that with the loss of the doctrine of fellowship, the fence which protects at one time protected the "others" has been smashed, and a merging in practice with the world, while perhaps frowned upon, has taken place.

When Ed. Turney pronounced the same heresy, which is now troubling the "others", particularly in Australia, it is refreshing to hear what R. Roberts had to say. Questioned why he simply spoke of Ed. Turney, David Handley, he replied:

“We have no wish to be discourteous. The men referred to have had a certain standing in the Truth by their former profession. ‘Mr.’ would conceal this. Yet their present position being one of ‘renunciation’ of what they believed, *they cannot be called brother* without implying that the doctrine of the sacrifice of Christ is of no importance.”

How many of the “others” are prepared to take this scriptural stand ; to come out and be separate from all that is defiling to *the Truth* ?

( . . . 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 55

*“To the One who overcomes, the Victor, on Neginoth (the harp) Maschil (instruction by meditation). A Psalm of David.”*

**T**HE *NEGINOTH* (the harp) is an instrument capable of yielding by its sweet and delicate tones, a most exhilarating and uplifting melody. Apart from the human voice there is nothing which compares with the heavenly melody of the harp.

It is significant that the harp should be referred to in more than one Title of the Psalms, in the context of “overcoming”. It will help if we transport ourselves to the future, to the consummation of all that the Psalms are intended to teach :

“And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.

And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder : and I heard the *voice of harpers harping with their harps.*

And they sung as it were a *new song.*”

(Revelation 14 : 1-3).

David, the “sweet psalmist” of Israel will be there, having *overcome*. And with him a great multitude like him, whose united voices, while in volume like “thunder”, will still be as sweet as the harp. Their voices will accompany the perfect and exquisitely beau-

tiful melody of praise. They and they only can be united in such perfect praise, the praise of the Spirit, implied in the word *new* song. It is well to note that all others are excluded, for "no man could learn that song" but "the hundred and forty and four thousand." Here is no trained choir, confined to those musically talented. The song of *the* Spirit is spontaneous, learned as David did, in the trials of probation. So David says in this Psalm :

"Give ear to my prayer, O God ; and hide not thyself from my supplication. Attend unto me, and hear me ; I mourn in my complaint . . .

Because of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked : for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath hate me." (verses 1-3).

No trial could be worse than to experience hatred at the hands of those one has tried to help. David did try to help Saul, but it was to no avail. In the bitterness experienced by David he proved his faith, and through affliction was prevented from going astray. We can appreciate how he felt :

"Oh that I had wings like a dove ! For then would I fly away, and be at rest." (verse 6).

#### THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST IN THE PSALM

It is difficult to appreciate that the Son of God should be called to endure similar suffering. Yet it is testified :

"He learned obedience by the things which he suffered."  
(Hebrews 5 : 8).

In this Psalm, which undoubtedly shows how David suffered at the hands of false brethren, there is a painful picture of Jesus who had the same bitter experience.

"For it was not an enemy that reproached me ; then I could have borne it . . .

But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.

We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company." (verses 12-14).

We can never know the depths of anguish Jesus suffered at the hands of his brother, betrayer Judas. Here it is foreshadowed. What a comfort it would be to Jesus, who knew so well all the Scripture, to realise that what He suffered was the means of making Him the *Victor*, and the means of :

"Bringing many sons to glory" as He the "captain of their salvation (was made) perfect through sufferings."  
(Hebrews 2 : 10).

What a comfort it would be to Jesus to have this inspired Psalm in mind ; how He would delight to meditate upon it, as He spent lonely nights in prayer—

“As for me, I will call upon God ; and the Lord shall save me.

Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud : and he shall hear my voice.” (verses 16-17).

He knew “what was in man” ! Indeed He did. The Psalm would remind Him of how treacherous human nature can be.

“The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart ; his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.” (verse 21).

Oh ! How wretched is our nature ! Truly, only worthy of death ! Nothing could be more grieving than to discuss with a brother, who appears to agree with you, but in his heart there is opposition, if not bitterness. This was the experience of our Captain : of the Apostle Paul. Is it surprising then, if in spite of best endeavours, we shall be called upon to suffer similarly ? May the Psalm give us strength when we are weak, comfort when we are cast down, hope when we feel despair. To this end the Psalm concludes with a triumphant chord :

“Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.”  
(verse 22).

(to be continued).

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## Lessons from Jeremiah

### DELIVERANCE IN A TIME OF BREAKING DOWN

*“And the Chaldeans burned the king’s house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem.”* (Jeremiah 39 : 8).

**I**N SUCH A TIME of breaking down as referred to in the above quotation a protection afforded to a “Remnant” is revealed. Is it not an example of God’s protection that such a fierce ruler as Nebuchadnezzar should be caused to give special charge concerning Jeremiah :

“Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying, Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm ; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee.”

(Jeremiah 39 : 11-12).

Prior to this God had been particularly mindful of a gentile, in itself significant, showing that God is no respecter of persons, nor has He ever been, but is equally merciful to any who may seek Him, even though He did call Israel to be a special people for Himself.

“Now the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying, Go and speak to Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel ; Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good ; and they shall be accomplished in that day before thee.

But I will deliver thee in that day, saith the Lord : and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid.

For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord.”

(Jeremiah 39 : 15-18).

All that God required at that time was trust in Him, it mattered not that Ebed-melech was not one born of the tribes of Israel, and it mattered not that he was what is now termed one of the coloured races. This stranger had shown more respect for the message of God, than those who claimed to be the true seed. He had also shown mercy in a most courageous manner at a time when many of the leaders of the Jews wanted to kill Jeremiah and silence his message because it was condemnatory of their apostasy.

The record reveals what happened :

“Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death : for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them : for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt.

Then Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he is in your hand : for the king is not he that can do any thing against you. Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison : and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire : so Jeremiah sunk in the mire.

Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put

Jeremiah in the dungeon ; the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin ;

Ebed-melech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying,

My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon ; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is : for there is no more bread in the city.

Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die."

(Jeremiah 38 : 4-10).

So a stranger under the hand of God delivered the prophet from a pit of destruction. It is obvious that those who should have led the people in ways of good counsel, were merely looking at the situation from a fleshly and human stand point. All the warnings that had gone before, of what would happen to the apostates in Israel, even from the times of Moses, were not even contemplated, yet the people were in desperate straits, their city surrounded by a great army from the north with serious famine weakening them. It might be thought surprising that not even in the least did they consider their own position before God, to ask themselves the question, are we not at fault that God has allowed this calamity, and brought such a great reversal upon us ? But because they were taken up wholly by their own human reasoning there was no self-examination. Their counsel therefore was to the effect. "We must fight on, it is the only way to live, and Jeremiah must die, because his counsel of capitulation is undermining resistance".

So through human reasoning they went on fighting against God, instead of trusting in His mercy, promised to those who respond to His good counsel, and the end was inevitably their own woe and destruction. How different it would have been if they had responded to God and submitted to His purpose concerning Jeerusalem's overthrow, then God would have given them life.

To bring the lesson to a present day application there probably are times when God's people find a choice of decision before them, and are tempted at such a time to lean towards human reasoning rather than to His message. This can be because His way requires faith, whereas human reasoning can fall into the trap of thinking what appears to be the safer course, is indeed safe. Such a time of decision is a test of faith of whether there will be a listening to Him and a waiting upon His guidance or not.

If Jeremiah had not been of the calibre so evidently displayed

in the record he would have held his peace. But not only was he courageous, he truly desired the welfare of his people, he wanted them to live, and he wanted to deliver them from the torments of famine and the sword ; moreover he was absolutely convinced that God's word would not fail.

What a test of faith when he was cast into the depths of the dungeon at the hand of his enemies where he had to wallow in the mire. But then in the very depth of despair, with all against him, deliverance, God's deliverance, came from an unexpected quarter ! As already considered, through a man of Ethiopia, who had respect for Jeremiah's work. Following this severe trial Jeremiah was given provision, even though it was not in abundance, and a better place in which to stay, even though it was not complete freedom. Jeremiah had to WAIT for complete deliverance, God's help came in stages. But when collapse came and the city was overwhelmed and all seemed lost, that very catastrophe brought freedom to Jeremiah, which came from the last person one would have expected consideration to have come, "Take him and look well to him", said Nebuchadnezzar.

It was not the end of Jeremiah's troubles, but it was deliverance from that particular trouble. He still had to persist in the work of the Truth and be disappointed at the rejection of his endeavours in attempting to give his people God's good counsel.

But Jeremiah is an example of faith, of patience, and of courage in a time of trial, of persistence in upholding God's message, even though in danger from the adversary. Also an example of discretion and of good sense in the presence of the king of his people, who had treated him so badly as is evident from a perusal of the 38th chapter.

These things are examples, and have been preserved to instruct and encourage God's people to have faith in difficult times. This account, also gives assurance that deliverance can come from the most unexpected quarters and in very remarkable ways, which human reasoning does not foresee.

D.L.

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

*“Mischief shall come upon mischief . . . the people of the land shall be troubled.”*

*“Wherefore I will bring the worst of the Heathen, and they shall possess their houses : I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease ; and their Holy Places shall be defiled.*

*Destruction cometh ; and they shall seek peace, and there shall be none. Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour . . . The hand of the people of the land shall be troubled : I will do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them ; and they shall know that I am the Lord.”*

(Ezekiel 7 : 24-27).

**T**HE ABOVE MESSAGE of course was meaningful for the days in which Ezekiel lived, but as is so often the case prophetic scripture has more than one fulfilment, and certainly has its application upon modern situations.

There is much in present day Israel which is not in keeping with that which Jews profess to uphold. There is also considerable self-reliance instead of the exemplary faith and trust in God that their early forefathers showed. Further, there is much tradition which buries the simple and yet sublime truths that were revealed to, and through, the Jewish nation. An example of tradition is evidenced in the ceremonies that take place in that part of the Old City of Jerusalem called the Western Wall, known also as the Wailing Wall. Each evening when the worshippers have left those ancient remains of bygone days, a late observer might see a watchman, with a beard, and wearing a black skull cap after the manner of Orthodox Jews, sweeping up scraps of paper from below the great stones. Upon these pieces of paper are the written requests of the worshippers at the wall, posted in the crevices of what are reputed to be Herodian stones, so that divine blessing and response to the requests may ensue. These written prayers, usually inscribed in Yiddish or Hebrew and sometimes in English usually make supplication for either health or wealth and sometimes have a political appeal. The gathered fragments are placed in a box, which when full is buried in consecrated ground along with old Jewish prayer books. No doubt this custom is encouraged because it has a tourist

appeal, especially for some, and will bring into the country coinage from abroad. But the scripture sounds a note of warning :

“. . . their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord ; they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels : because it is the stumbling-block of their iniquity.” (Ezekiel 7 : 19).

As Ezekiel's prophecy says, “they shall seek peace, and there shall be none”. This is what Israel desires, but it cannot be achieved without God. Its leaders have indicated a willingness to reach an interim settlement with Egypt over the Sinai Peninsula which comprises about one-seventh of Egyptian territory. A member of the Israeli government has said :

“In the Sinai Desert it is possible, by agreement between Egypt and Israel, to draw a dividing line, temporary or permanent, which would give the populated areas both of Israel and of Egypt a range of security . . . ”

“The principles which should guide us in this matter are Israel's security and the non-resumption of war. If we will have to choose between achieving these goals—even, for the time being, without an overall peace treaty—and the absence of any progress, we should prefer progress, even if it be partial.”

But whatever the signs of what appears to be a relaxation of tension between Israel and the Arabs, “Destruction cometh.”

It has been noted that at a summit meeting between the United States' President and Soviet leaders in Moscow last May, the leaders of these two great powers “agreed to isolate all regional conflicts from bilateral U.S.—Soviet relations”. No doubt the Russian government's thinking was channelled towards the framing of such a statement as a result of Egypt's expulsion of its Soviet “advisers”. But later developments indicate that the basic spheres of influence, as indicated by prophecy, will continue to move in line with what is to transpire in that day which is approaching, as foretold in the words :

“Thus saith the Lord God ; An evil, an only evil, behold, is come.

An end is come, the end is come : it watcheth for thee ; behold it is come.

The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land : the time is come, the day of trouble is near, and not the sounding again of the mountains.” (Ezekiel 7 : 5-7).

The "thunder" of conflict is to be unmistakably heard again over Israel. Hence, even though there is some measure of rapprochement between the United States and the Soviet Union, both powers are inevitably drawn into opposing positions in the Middle East. It is significant that last October the Shah and Empress of Persia went on a tour of Russia starting at Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. At the time a fifteen year economic treaty was signed by the Soviet Union and Iran under which Russia will help Persia to develop its oil and gas industries, also its electric power, metallurgy and transport. This event, of which there was very little publicity, is a reminder that when the armies of the northern power descend on "the land" they will have :

"Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them . . ."  
(Ezekiel 38 : 5).

So, even though Iran is a monarchy, something supposedly alien to communist thinking, events move in the direction as indicated in prophecy. The same applies to the United States' position in the area, for even though unpopular with the Arabs because of its support of Israel it retains a certain status in areas south of Israel. The king of Saudi Arabia has indicated he is ready to bind his country to the United States with a commercial oil agreement which would give Saudi Arabia a special place in the United States market. As Arabia has nearly twenty-five per cent of the world's proven oil reserves, there is an advantage for both parties in such an agreement, which would also help to protect the already tremendous American investments in that country, where Aramco is only one of several large Middle East concessionaries that is entirely American owned. America is also gaining ground in peripheral states like the Yemen and the Sudan, where it has re-established diplomatic relations. The United States has also entered into a huge natural gas purchasing agreement with Algeria, supposedly anti-western. It is significant that when Persia sought preferential treatment by the United States for Iranian oil some three years ago America did not show sufficient interest.

These events are pointers indicating the working out of God's purpose.

Recent irritations and threats, which Jews have had to endure are also like-wise reminders of how God's word continues to be fulfilled. The death of the Israeli athletes, following Arab guerrilla activity, at the Olympic Games in Munich during September, harrassed and angered the Israeli authorities. Israel wanted to join with the nations in a sense of comradeship and pride of achievement, as a member competitor in such a world event. The fruit of

its participation however was very bitter indeed. Later came the letter bombs posted by Arab guerilla organisations to prominent Jews, some of whom were injured. Such a subtle threat must have alarmed many Jews and perhaps been a reminder to some that they need God's protection.

Ezekiel foretold of such things all those many years ago when he declared :

“Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour . . . ” (Ezekiel 7 : 26).

These events fit in with the general theme of his message that “An end is come,” and that God will bring “the worst of the heathen” at a time when “they shall seek peace, and there shall be none.”

D.L.

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## Correspondence

*Letter from M.N. Eastbourne.*

“Have enjoyed your magazine very much. It holds the Truth as I was brought up to respect it . . . for 57 years.”

*REPLY :*

To appreciate *the* Truth is good ; to admire it is better ; to be obedient to it is best, as providing the only hope for poor mortals.

W.V.B.

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## News from the Ecclesias

*NEWTOWNARDS, CO. DOWN, Northern Ireland.*

Breaking of Bread, Sunday 11-30 a.m.

Sunday School 2-0 p.m.

Bible Class—Wednesday evening.

It is always uplifting and strength giving when we see the evidence of the spirit's power working in our midst, and this has been very clearly shown to us in the discussions we have recently had in Manchester. Much help has been given and we are grateful for the unity achieved through counsel together.

Winter brings a break in the face to face contacts, and we miss them, but are thankful for letters and the telephone.

J.P

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.

The Sunday School party is planned, God willing, for 10th  
February, 1973.

Much gratitude is felt for the guidance given by an all-wise  
Father on the questions which arise in His house. The knowledge  
that He is in the midst where two or three are gathered in His  
name is a great blessing, enabling all questions to be resolved.

Work continues with those seeking His truth. The privilege of  
this work is uplifting and inspiring, helping to a fuller realization  
of the wonder of His Truth being revealed to mere man.

J.A.DeF

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

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

We have been given an abrupt notice to quit the Hall where for  
twenty-five years we have held our Bible Classes. To find a suitable  
alternative seemed almost impossible, but we have been blessed  
with accommodation as above.

Efforts are being made to find an alternative to the Sunday Hall.  
The stairs are proving a great difficulty for some, and in addition  
the Hall is threatened with re-development. We are hoping we shall  
be blessed with such a Hall as will meet all requirements, and pro-  
vide for the continuance of the witness to the Truth. This month's  
lectures are on the general title of : "What is Truth ?".

W.V.B.

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"PENTRIP", Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread : Sundays, 11-30 a.m.  
Bible Class : Mid-week.

The new poster at Criccieth Station is a striking testimony to the  
Truth, as follows :

*"God has not left himself without witness."*

In His Word—the Bible.

In the Indestructible Jew.

What does this mean to you ?