

JANUARY 1979

A Monthly Magazine issued by

# 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"**

---

**"AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD"**

**"TO THE ONE WHO OVERCOMES  
THROUGH THE STRENGTH OF THE MORNING"**

**"OUR LABOUR"**

**"THE BENEFITS OF TROUBLE"**

**"THE 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,  
Cheadle,  
Cheadle, SK8 6EH

J. A. DeFries  
R.D.1. Forestville,  
New York 14062  
U.S.A.

## At the Table of the Lord

### “That Thy Faith Fail Not”

**T**HE RECORD OF THE LAST DAYS of Jesus' life, as recorded for us in Luke, can be a great help and inspiration in our struggle to get the victory over our flesh. Those days must have been very difficult for Jesus as He knew that the end of God's purpose was close at hand. He *knew* He soon would be betrayed by Judas for thirty pieces of silver. He *knew* He soon must die and agonized to do so faithfully, fearing lest He fail in God's purpose. He *knew* He would be denied by Peter. All this made it even more difficult for Jesus to obey God and be subject to His purpose. Yet, He did, and more too. His thought, His care, His love was for His brethren and sisters, even in the midst of agonizing to put down His flesh. In love, He established this Table where we have been privileged to meet this morning to help us remember Him, to recognize more clearly as our brother has reminded us, that this is *the* means of salvation. Jesus' great desire was to help His brethren at that time; and through that same strength, to help us nearly 2,000 years later. He was very much aware of the flesh's weakness, for He had the same tendencies and fears, and so can help through His feeling for us.

### “I am among you as He that Serveth”

Jesus' knowledge of our weakness and His help to overcome it is shown in Luke 22:24, where we read of a strife among His disciples as to “which of them should be accounted the greatest.” How like the flesh as it sought supremacy. Here was Jesus' agonizing to put down His weakness; and, at the same time His disciples were quarrelling among themselves to see who was the greatest. How would Jesus feel? Perhaps angry because they showed no thought or care for His great struggle. Perhaps sad because they were concerned over having the preeminence when He so recently had given them this Table so that they could remember His victory, His sacrifice. Such thoughts would have been understandable in Jesus. But, no, instead He corrected His disciples, taught them, chastened them in a kindly and gentle spirit, verses 26 and 27:

“... ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

“... I am among you as he that serveth.”

“To serve” means “to minister”, or “to be a servant”. The Lord Jesus was one who ministered, and also wants us, His brethren and sisters, to minister. If we seek to be the greatest, is this the spirit of

serving? Is this the mind of a servant? Is this the mind of Christ? Obviously not. Jesus, in the midst of His ministry and in His struggle to overcome, thought of His brethren and encouraged them (and through them, ourselves) to be true servants, men and women devoted to serving God, and showing that service of God by ministering to one another. In this connection, we remember Jesus' words:

“. . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” (Matthew 25:40)

How needful and helpful His instruction is for us, brethren and sisters, in our living together in the desire to please God, and to strengthen each other in the way.

### “I am ready to go with thee”

Jesus' help for us continues as He spoke with Peter who had said:

“. . . Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.” (Luke 22:33)

Very impressive were these words of Peter; yet, on that very day, Peter feared to go into the high priest's house — let alone into prison or death — and there thrice he denied Jesus. How easy it is to say, “I am ready to go with thee.” We are flesh; we are weak; we fear. Jesus knows these fears, and is ready to help, even when “Satan hath desired to have you.” Jesus' response was:

“. . . I have prayed for thee, that *thy faith fail not*. . . .”  
(Luke 22:32)

How great our blessing, brethren and sisters, that Jesus is ready to pray that *our* faith fail not. Peter's words were positive, so strong sounding; yet, when his faith was tested, he failed miserably. Our faith also is weak, as we are made to realize by bitter experiences. Yet, Jesus is there to pray for us as our High Priest at His Father's right hand. What greater strengthening can be found than the prayers of Jesus? He said to Peter, “. . . I have prayed for thee. . . .”; and He said it also to us, brethren and sisters. We remember Jesus' circumstances at the time. His own faith was being sorely tried; yet, He prayed for His brethren. Is this an example of how He truly was “among you as he that serveth”? Do we realize how great is our need for His serving in this way, brethren and sisters? Do we seek His strength, recognizing our own weakness? Let us turn to Him who prays for us, as He did for Peter and so find help to endure during our time of probation.

**“Lacked ye Anything?”**

Jesus further encouraged His followers and ourselves as He asked:

“. . . When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing?” (Luke 22:35)

A simple question; yet, how much is involved for our help. “*Sent*”, we find, is the word from which “Apostles” is derived and means “caused to go forth” or “set apart”. Jesus sent forth His followers to teach of His Father’s purpose to be accomplished in Himself. The power of God went with them as they went forth in dangerous circumstances. In Luke 10:3, we see their situation:

“Go your ways: behold I send you forth as lambs among wolves.”

What a frightening experience this could be for them! Yet, there is more:

“Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes. . . .” (verse 4)

No purse meant no money with them. How can I eat or find lodging without money? common sense would say. More still, no scrip! A scrip was a container to carry food. No food! Our natural reaction would be, how foolish! But, wait; Jesus continued, No shoes! How can I walk; I know not how far without shoes; my feet will hurt; I’ll get blisters. All these reactions, no doubt, came to the minds of those seventy sent forth, and surely they come to our mind. No doubt, similar thoughts occurred to Jesus as He was sent of His Father to finish the work. Jesus knew how to help, as He was helped, helped of God in the work given. Hence, His question to His followers, “Lacked ye anything?” Luke 10 tells us of the experiences of those sent:

“. . . the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us *through thy name*.” (verse 17)

What help they experienced, and Jesus further encouraged them and us as He said:

“Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” (Luke 10:19)

Power to tread on a serpent, to overcome the strength of the enemy! Don’t we need that power over our greatest enemy, the flesh, to keep it down? How can we do it? By faith, by trust in the One who sends us, recognizing the power that He bestows to help us do it. Can we see then, brethren and sisters, why Jesus asked those whom He sent, “Lacked ye anything?” And, from their experience, how they could reply so succinctly, “Nothing!” We, too, can experience this wonder-

ful power and grow in the conviction that we shall lack nothing. As we come to this realization, let us respond to Jesus' prayer "that thy faith fail not." How easy it is to feel a lack, as indeed we do at times; but if Jesus is helping, praying for us, will we *really lack in the ways that are important?* We remember Jesus' prayer for His followers:

"As thou *hast sent* me into the world, even so have I also *sent* them into the world." (John 17:18)

Are we not sent, brethren and sisters; and, being sent, can we not be strengthened by Jesus' prayer on our behalf? He further prayed:

"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." (verse 9)

And, again:

"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." (verse 15)

If we are sent, the work given to us is in this world. We can trust in being kept from its evil, through the supplications of Jesus Christ. Again, we are helped to see why Jesus asked those sent out into the world, "Lacked ye anything?" If we can but grow in faith, sustained by Jesus' supplication and His mediatorship for us, we, too, by these experiences can reply, "Nothing". For what greater strength or power can there be than God's working on our behalf in response to the prayers of His Son?

### **"The Lord wrought a great victory"**

In our portions read recently, confirmation can be found of this power working on behalf of His people. We read of David's reaction to the deliverance in II Samuel 22:1:

"And 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:"

David had felt God's hand delivering him from the lion and the bear, from Goliath, from Saul, from Absalom, from his failure in regard to Bathsheba, from Joab. Truly, here was great deliverance from danger, from death, and from the greatest enemy David knew, his own flesh nature. David continued:

". . . The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer;  
"The God of my rock; in him will I trust. . . ." (verses 2 and 3)

What would David's reply be if asked, "Lacked ye anything"? Further, David found very tangible help in the "mighty men" spoken of in II Samuel 23, men who in great strength were his

companions and protectors. God worked with them as well; for we read in verses 10 and 12, as they conquered David's enemies:

“... and the LORD wrought a great victory...”

How would these “mighty men” respond if asked, “Lacked ye anything”? How helped, they and David must have felt, as they went about the work given, strengthened by the Hand of God.

Jeremiah's experiences were very similar. As we have read in Jer. 32, he was required of God to redeem the field of Hanameel which was located in Anathoth. This he was told to do while in prison and while Jerusalem was under siege by the Babylonian army. The field in Anathoth was already in the possession of the Babylonians, and as such was worthless to Jeremiah or any Israelite. Yet, God said, “buy it” as a sign to Judah and Jerusalem that:

“... Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.” (Jer. 32:15)

How difficult this would be to believe as the armies of Nebuchadrezzar were about to overwhelm the city of God, as the times of the Gentiles were about to begin. It took great faith on Jeremiah's part to accept God's word and to buy that field. This faith, we find, expressed in verse 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:”

God's response to Jeremiah was:

“Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?” (verse 27)

Familiar words, for we have heard them before. When Sarah laughed as the messenger told her she would have a son at 90 years of age, the messenger replied:

“Is any thing too hard for the LORD?” (Genesis 18:14)

Again, when the messenger of God came to Mary, she said:

“... How shall this be...”

And, the messenger replied:

“... with God nothing shall be impossible.” (Luke 1:34, 37)

How helpful, how encouraging, brethren and sisters, it is to know that Jesus prays for us, “that thy faith fail not,” and reminds us, “When I sent you ... lacked ye anything?” Let us hear; let us believe; let us go forth, and so be more able to reply, “Nothing.”

J. A. De F.

## To the One who overcomes through the strength of the morning

**E**ACH OF US HAS BEEN CALLED BY CHRIST to be a part of Him and to share in that unspeakable glory which is now His. The nearer we come in contemplation to that glory the more difficult it is to describe — words fail. No wonder that the servants of God, who in time past saw that glory, were struck dumb and could not speak. Yes, this glory, though “unspeakable” is *real*.

But how can I overcome, for I fail, and I fail again? How can it be said of any of us, that we have overcome even as He overcame? Yet this — this overcoming — is the simple condition of the glorious reward which we are seeking. So we must try and find the answer with all the help which the Spirit is providing.

Some fifty-five of these psalms are inscribed “To him that overcometh”; and in the last message of Christ, seven times He repeats: “To him that overcometh.” To fully understand what these words mean we must consider Jesus Himself, His brethren saw His trials — real, grievous temptations. How serious they must have been to the Lord Jesus. As He meets each point we see how there is uppermost in His mind the Law of God — “Him only shalt thou serve.” He knew there was to be “a morning” — the morning *would* come when the promised rewards would be bestowed. Here was His joy and His strength, and in that strength He overcame.

Towards the end of His life we are allowed to see Him — virtually alone. His disciples are fallen asleep and He is in an agony — a conflict — but He overcame: “Not My will, but Thine be done.” And *we* are to overcome even as He overcame.

We can turn to His mind, as revealed in the psalm about this time, to see where His strength lay and to perceive that it was the joy set before Him that enabled Him to endure.

*“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? O my God, I cry in the daytime but thou hearest not, but thou art holy.”*

Then His mind reveals that absolute faith —

*“Our father’s trusted in thee and thou didst deliver them.”*

and He calls to mind why He was born—

*“Thou art he that took me out of the womb . . . thou art my God from my mother’s belly.”*

Should not these thoughts have some application to each of us? In His appeal, He proceeds:—

*“I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax: it is melted in the midst of my bowels.”*

Have we here the effect of that conflict when faithfully made? The heart like wax, and anything approaching rebellion gone, and instead, a readiness to respond to all that God might require or that He might bring upon us? Then the Lord Jesus thinks of the morning and of that time when He will be there in the glory of His Father, with, too, the faithful of all generations who have overcome in His strength:—

*“Save me from the lion's mouth . . . deliver my soul from the sword . . . I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.”*

What a wonderful reality it all was in the mind of the Lord Jesus. Can our minds reach up to this:—

*“Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him; all ye seed of Jacob, glorify Him . . . For he hath not despised the affliction of the afflicted . . . but when he cried unto him: he heard. My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.”*

We read these words and marvel at the mind which uttered them, but who would think that when these words were spoken Jesus was on the tree, nailed and suffering? What strength was wrought!

The time is coming when a generation shall be born which shall declare His righteousness, when the “meek shall eat and be satisfied . . . for the Kingdom is the Lord's.” What a wonderful victory it was in the case of Christ.

Great is the task which faces each one of us — the task of overcoming. Does not the Spirit say that he that ruleth his spirit is mightier than he that taketh a city? Each of us are faced with trials, real, grievous trials. But so was Christ — and He overcame by “the strength of the morning.” Let us, then, in all our trials remember that here is strength, the strength of the morning, the morning star which points to the day.

In the course of our overcoming we must, exhorts the apostle, add to our faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance, and to temperance, patience; to patience, godliness; to godliness, brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, love.

We've a long way to go! But Christ is in heaven; He is there in power and glory to help us in *our* conflict, in our struggling, to show forth these fruits of the Spirit. If we continue to strive and achieve through the strength of Christ these spiritual qualities, we shall become one who ruleth our own spirit — we shall overcome. The promise, then, is—"I will give you the morning star." How wonderful these words when we appreciate what is involved, and when, if faithful, we are granted to sit with Him in His throne!

W.V.B.



## Our Labour

**I**N OUR PORTIONS IN JOHN, we have been reading of the miracles and witnessing done by the Lord Jesus as he set about to finish the work that God had given Him. How essential is the help His word and works can be to us today in the work God gives to us, if we allow our hearts to be touched and our minds to be moved by entering into Jesus' example of subjection.

In the ministry of Jesus, we have read how the people were attracted to Him because they had seen and heard of the wonderful miracles He was able to perform. In John 6, we are told, that the company which came out to him in Galilee numbered about five thousand besides women and children. A great opportunity was thus presented to Jesus to witness and testify through the miraculous increase of five barley loaves and two small fishes to feed that multitude to their fill. That the multitude was moved by this occasion was seen by their reaction as the 14th and 15th verses of John 6 tell us:

“Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

“When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.”

The words of the multitude proclaimed that Jesus was that prophet foretold of, but their discernment of what was to be his work, would seem to have been misunderstood, as they would have endeavoured to make Jesus king at that time.

### With Prayer

Jesus' reaction, rather than one of joy, must have been one of disappointment because of their lack of understanding of his purpose as their redeemer, so he sent them away and alone departed into a mountain to pray. Jesus had learned from experience where His strength dwelt, and so sought often as on this occasion to commune with God through prayer, calling unto God to be strengthened in this work of witnessing, for he knew that it was only through God that increase could come as His words in verses 37 and 38 explain:

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.”

Must not we, in our work of witnessing, reflect that spirit of Jesus, realizing that God gives such a work according to His will, and according to His purpose calls those who eventually may be joined to Christ. This is not to say that such a work will be easy, that it will always be encouraging. On the contrary, it was not for the Lord Jesus, neither then can we expect it to be so for us. What can be said, however, must be said to God through prayer, asking His will be done, that He use us according to His purpose and that He grant us the strength and wisdom to faithfully magnify His name. If our spirits can submit in such a way, how much help we can know in whatever difficult situations we find ourselves while witnessing to our Father's word.

We are further given help by the words of the Lord Jesus as He again spoke to this same multitude concerning their lack of being properly moved at his testimony. Perhaps, if we can see the reasons for their failure, we can avoid falling into the same snare. Jesus in verse 26, speaking to them, said:

“ . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.”

In the food given to the five thousand, Jesus had satisfied their physical hunger. They were filled, but this was as far as their perception would seem to have gone, for they failed to see the power of the Spirit which was manifested before their eyes at the hands of the Lord Jesus. Their seeking was to their own gratification.

### **Beware of Flesh**

Here are we warned, then, that the typical seeking of the flesh is after its own satisfaction and to take heed of this warning, we must indulge ourselves in the words of the Lord Jesus who was flesh, as we are, and knows what we are like. In verse 27, He tells us:

“Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.”

How easy for us to lose perception of our labours in our daily living. We are reminded here that there is a labour for meat which perisheth and a labour for meat which endureth unto everlasting life. The question posed to ourselves is: which meat are our labours seeking? We know that our labour must be after the spiritual meat in order to please God, but how ever-present is the subtlety of the flesh to reduce our efforts. The flesh is naturally inclined towards the things which support it, its food, its covering apparel, its job, its home, its acquaintances, its wealth, its security. These are all very real and very

appealing attractions to each of us because of our inherent natures. When we are enticed, tempted into labouring in pursuit of these material things, we can perhaps balance the scale by considering their ability to hold up under the test of time. Will they last indefinitely, or are they subject to perishing even within our few short years in this life?

### A Warning Example

The Lord Jesus speaks to us again in this regard by parable in Luke 12:16-19, saying:

“. . . The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

“And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

“And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

“And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.”

Undoubtedly, much labour would have been spent by the man of this parable, to bring about the great increase he knew, an increase which in the sight of those around him would have brought him esteem and respect, and increase in which he had placed all of his confidence for the future. God’s reply in the 20th verse revealed how He looked upon this man’s fleshly security, his labour of love, so to speak:

“But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?”

The failure here was in the lack to perceive the fleeting quality of those things after which there was labour, a dangerous oversight we too can fail to see. The best recourse to prevent such a failure, Jesus goes on in verse 22 and 23 to tell us, as He told His disciples:

“. . . Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

“The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.”

And, in verses 30 through 32:

“For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

“But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

“Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

“Take no thought.” This can be rendered to mean “to be not anxious about,” “to be not distracted” by the cares and attractions of this life, but rather substitute such cares by the seeking of the kingdom of God and all of these things shall be provided, for God does know our every need, and never has there been an instance where God has failed to provide for any of His children what He knows is best for them. This is something we must not forget, rather we must lay hold on this knowledge, taking that comfort in our hearts, believing on His word without fear, knowing that it is in God’s good pleasure to give to us all that He has promised, but only as He sees our seeking, our labouring after the meat of the spirit.

### With Diligence

Isaiah, speaking the words of God in chapter 55, verses 2 and 3, repeats what our labour must be, along with reaffirming God’s promise:

“Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

“Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.”

Our labours, then, are to hearken diligently unto God, inclining our ear unto His word, to eat that which is good, indulging in the word of God so that which is taken in can feed and nourish the growth of our spirit, to let our soul delight itself in fatness and joy in the goodness which comes from partaking of the word which will endure unto everlasting life. All this, then, is the meat of our work which has been cut out for us and just as clear must be our realization that it is now that we must labour for that meat which endureth unto eternal life, in order to be ready when God’s Son returns to judge each one according to his own works. We must, therefore, take care to examine what our labours are, questioning whether they are in the right direction, making sure it is the enduring meat we are working towards.

Let us not be fooled by our flesh into wasting our energies on perishable meat. Let us rather in earnest prayer, recognizing the seriousness of the work entrusted to each and every one of us by God, be about it in the spirit of the Lord Jesus, for the time must surely be short until Christ’s coming who will bring with Him that enduring provision, a provision we must hunger after now if we expect to maintain our hope to partake with Christ in that portion forever.

M.C.S.

## **The Benefits of Trouble**

**Do not allow trouble to overwhelm you**

BELOVED,

I have thought to write a second letter to you because of the continued prevalence of trouble. We live in a time of trouble — trouble without, trouble within — trouble in the world at large, trouble at home — trouble in politics, trouble in business — trouble between nations, trouble among the peoples — trouble among those who know not God, and trouble among those who have named the name of Christ in the obedience of the original apostolic gospel recovered in our days from the smothering accumulations of ecclesiastical traditions that had gathered over it.

Be not downcast at the prevalence of trouble. Remember the words of Christ: "Behold, I have told you before." This he said both concerning the troubles that were to mark the close of the Apostolic and Gentile ages; and in general, as concerning the inevitable experience of his friends in the present evil world. And his object in telling it beforehand was that his friends might have consolation in the trouble. He plainly says, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid:" "in me, ye shall have peace:" "in your patience possess ye your souls."

It is true that trouble is trouble however we may take it. At the same time it is robbed of its power to destroy if we recognise that it is inevitable — that it is appointed — and further that it has a purpose to serve. God can give peace or trouble without showing His hand. The ways of His providence exhibited to us in the Scriptures of truth (and nowhere else) show us this plainly. It is God that is in the troubles that are abroad. He troubles the world because they have corrupted His way in all the earth, and have cast Him behind their backs, and own Him not in any way, although the earth is His and all that it contains. The hour of His judgment is at the door, when there shall be a time of trouble such as never was; and it is His pleasure to prepare for the visible advent of that hour by a gradual harassment of human affairs such as we have seen for years past.

### **The right way to view trouble**

He troubles His people that they may be helped to take to heart thoroughly what they know concerning the vanity of all present things and the enduring nature alone of the things related to His

purpose in Christ. We are so prone to cling to present things: we are so liable to forget the wide-sweeping and eternal reality of His mighty ways that we need a little help. There is nothing helps like trouble. This is the testimony of universal experience. Even the Psalmist says, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray: but now I have kept thy word."

Trouble need not, and will not, and can not, cease to be trouble: for then it would miss its effect. But there are different ways of taking it, and it is to suggest the right way of taking it that I, your fellow-sufferer, write these things. It can be taken with no resignation and no comfort. It needs not to be said that this is not the right way. This is a way that leads only to evil. I have seen many walk in this way. They are not sufficiently enlightened to know that trouble can have a mission. You are to them as one that mocks if you suggest that a purpose is in it. They cannot see such a thing and they have no faith in it, and they refuse to be resigned or comforted. They feel only as a creature feels that is whipped. They smart under the pain and whine.

The danger of such a state of mind lies in the steps to which it will incline the person who is the subject of it. Never having in reality accepted the divine teaching that "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth," he fails to be reasonably exercised by the chastening when it comes, and in the words of Christ, "is offended," or stumbles, and driven by it to be discouraged in all divine directions. He loses his interest in the truth: he ceases to find any pleasure in the duties associated with it: he returns to ways he had abandoned, and seeks to soothe the asperities of his sin-stricken state of existence in the exercises, occupations and pursuits of the old man, in pleasure, business or worldly association. Paul had to write of such a one at last "*Demas hath forsaken me, having loved the present world*".

The right way is known to you all; for my words are to those whom the Lamb shall at last lead to living fountains of waters, and wipe away all tears from their eyes. Those are "obedient children," who have learnt the spirit's wisdom at the mouth of the Apostles, when they say "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God:" "faint not when thou art rebuked of Him," "think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing had happened unto you," "for hereunto were ye called:" "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing."

The right way is not to kick at trouble, or resent it, or be discouraged by it, but to take it patiently — to look at it, and into it, so as to divine the meaning of it, and mix comfort with it. God is "a very present help in trouble" to all, who like David, "set God always before their face."

Paul calls Him “the God of all comfort,” and adds “He comforteth us in all our tribulations that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we, ourselves, are comforted of God.” This comfort we get by the exercise of our minds. God tells us not to be “like the horse or the mule which have no understanding.” Trouble (Paul says) “yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness *to them who are exercised thereby.*” Hence, we must reason, or exercise our minds upon, all our troubles, in order to get the comfort. By this, we do get it.

**R. Roberts**



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

“Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them.”

(Ez. 38:5)

**T**HE KING (KINGDOM) OF THE NORTH undoubtedly has Ethiopia and Libya on its side at the present time. But what of Persia?

In 1881 Russia forced Persia to accept a boundary that was most unfavourable to her, this was during the period of the Persian Qajar Dynasty, which ended in 1925. During this period both Russia and Britain interfered in Persian affairs. There was keen rivalry in Asia between these two powers, which nearly led to war between them in 1885. However in 1907, after Russia's disastrous war with Japan, the northern power was ready to come to terms with Britain. Both parties agreed to respect the “strict independence and integrity of Persia”, stipulating that each state bound itself to seek no concession of any kind in regions conterminous to the frontier of the other. To avoid misunderstanding the commercial spheres in Persia for the two Powers were then defined. That of Russia included Northern and Central Persia, while Great Britain merely reserved the deserts of south east Persia. Persia naturally disliked the agreement, her diplomacy at the time was based on the rivalry of the two powers; the agreement seemed as though Russia and Great Britain had agreed to dismember her. But Persia was not in a position to protest.

It was soon clear that Russian officials considered that the northern part of Persia had been made over to them, so when the First World War broke out, Russia was found gradually annexing northern Persia. The Russo-British agreement however was annulled after the conclusion of the First World War.

In the period 1909 to 1944 there was an upsurge in Persia. In 1911 it was decided that Americans should be engaged for the supervision of Persian finances. It was therefore an American national who was made treasurer general, and he conducted his office efficiently, but this brought him into conflict with Russian interests. Russia finally threatened to despatch troops to Tehran, demanding at the same time the American's dismissal.

National feeling in Persia became outraged. Russian goods were boycotted, as were British goods also, in the south. However, in the face of imminent disaster, the Persian Regent finally complied to Russia, and the Americans were sacked. Britain had consented to Russian policies at that time. There was however resentment in America, and also amongst certain political circles in Britain.

By 1921 Russia had become communist, and Persia had already given political recognition to the Soviet Union. Russia responded in the Russo-Persian treaty of January 1921 renouncing the old Czarist policy of force and aggression, and guaranteeing non intervention in the affairs of Persia, all treaties with other powers regarding Persia which had previously been made were denounced by the communists.

February 23rd 1921 saw the arrival at Tehran at the invitation of an influential Persian, of Riza Khan, then in command of the Cossack brigade. A new government was set up, and Persia started upon the new regime of Riza Khan Pahlavi. He began to build up a dependable and efficient Persian army and as a result of negotiations with the United States a strong financial mission arrived from America to set about the reformation of Persian finances. By October 31, 1925 Riza Khan Pahlavi was elected as Shah of Persia, with right of succession to his heirs. So began modern Persia.

During the period 1929 to 1935 Persia's relations with foreign powers improved. Better relations with Russia for example were celebrated. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company's concession of 1901 was also renewed. But World War Two was looming up and Persia viewed with anxiety the threat, having suffered in the First World War from the Turkish, Russian and British invasions.

It was at this time that Persia became Nazi orientated, no doubt because of the almost constitutional distrust of Russia and Britain as a result of past events. Tehran became a centre of German intrigue for the Middle East. But Russia and Britain did not stand by idly for long. They simultaneously descended on Persia in August 1942. Russia became responsible for the northern provinces, and Great Britain for the rest, Persia being assured by them of the evacuation of all forces six months after the termination of the war. As a result Persia declared war on the Axis powers on September 9th 1943.

The occupation however was most distressing for Persians, who saw in it a physical renewal of the previous threat of Russia and Britain dividing the country between them. Such apprehension however made no difference to the thinking of the great powers for within months Persia was used as a gateway for pouring into Russia the materials supplied by the Western powers to support Russia's

conflict against Germany. The Shah was forced to abdicate in favour of his son Muhammad Riza, so preventing civil disturbances which would have affected the Western Powers' supply line to Russia.

But the spending of money by the occupying forces produced great revenue for Persian finances. The young Shah moreover believed in American friendship. The Persian people, still fearing Russia and Britain also were glad to have American involvement and interest. An American was appointed treasurer general with large control. At the Tehran conference at the end of 1943 America, Britain and Russia jointly signed a declaration which recognised the territorial integrity independence and sovereignty of Persia. Thus keeping a measure of Persian goodwill and patience, so that the back door way to Russia could be maintained for the war to be carried out effectively against Germany.

At the end of the war Persia reaped the benefit of a much improved road and rail transportation system and greater port facilities which the allies had builded for their purposes.

Would there be no more threat, from Russia and Britain? Well Britain's sun had gone down over the Middle East; but not Russia's! Sources unfriendly to the Soviet Union have persistently implied that Russia intends to secure for herself, at Persia's expense a direct line to the Persian Gulf. How will the Soviet do this? It does not seem now that it will be accomplished by direct methods but rather by subversion; even as Ezekiel prophesied that Persia would be "with" the Northern Power at the time of the end. So Persia is in the throes of a revolution and the successor in the dynasty of Riza Khan Pahlavi is becoming very hard pressed. He has the Tudeh Communists to contend with on the one hand and the Moslem priesthood on the other, whose purses have been hit by the Shah's land reforms. Though Pahlavi has a rigid control over the news media he has either overlooked or been afraid to control the Mullahs who have therefore been able to use their pulpits to express their discontent. The Shah undoubtedly has tried to improve the state of the country, but sectional interest have not liked some of his radical ideas. So now only the army is with him. The former landowners the "clergy and the Left wing intelligentsia are his foes. The peasants and the new middle class who have greatly benefitted from his reforms remain strangely silent. So the mobs rage through Teheran shouting "death to the Shah" and government departments and even the oil-fields have been paralysed by strikes. The army has therefore had to take control of the nation on behalf of the Shah, but the Persian economy has suffered as a result of this recent trouble and vast sums of money have been taken out of the country and its foreign exchange reserves have become depleted.

From a place of exile in Paris one of the leading Moslem Priests continually propagates the view that "the Shah must go". He wants to replace the monarchy by "an Islamic Republic". As a result of his directives there has been ransacking of alcohol distributors, (a forbidden drink by extreme Moslem ideas) and women have again resumed the veil. This priest commands the allegiance of the Mullahs who are well supplied with funds some of which come from Libya. These Mullahs and Ayatollahs fear that if Persia becomes a Western-type society their wealth and authority will be irreversibly undermined.

Russia knows how to exploit such greed and self interest. It has been reported that the Russian leader has made the remark "Persia is proving a hard nut to crack; but we are working upon it and may succeed sooner than anyone expects." The Persian Communist Tudeh party does get Russian money; moreover many of the Persian tribes have a close kinship with peoples across the Persian border in the Soviet Union.

The Soviet President certainly does not want western interference in a state of affairs that looks like going his way for he has declared that any western intervention would be regarded as a threat to Soviet security. This of course has been stated for the purpose of bringing pressure upon the Shah, who has publicly rejected any idea of calling for outside military support.

The Secretary General of Nato views with concern the Persian trend. The upheaval there could he said "undercut Turkey's partnership with the West and Nato" for Turkey shares a common border with Persia. Some officers in Western Supreme Headquarters have expressed even greater anxiety over the establishment of a Moslem republic in Persia. What would happen to Persia's oil trade with Israel and the Mediterranean if Persia became an extreme Moslem republic?

Nevertheless the trend is very significant as America's friend the Shah becomes isolated on his Peacock throne, even while still holding this eminent position.

The fact is that there will be a change for this has been foretold and the scripture will most certainly be fulfilled. When the northern power comes against the land of Israel Persia will be allied with it. This is the message of Ezekiel's prophecy and events in Persia at the present time indicate the working out of that which the divine purpose requires.

## 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.

We rejoice to report the baptism of Peter Stokes, son of Brother Earl Stokes, into Christ's death on Tuesday, October 31. How grateful we feel for the blessing of a merciful Father that one more child of Adam has now the hope of escape from death.

Witnessing continues, with encouragement given through numerous replies to letters sent out with the *Remnant Magazine*.

We are mindful of illnesses, trials, difficulties in these last days and pray for His help and healing which we all need so badly.

J.A.De F.

### **"PENTRIP", Black Rock, Portmadoc**

Breaking of Bread: Sundays, 11.30 a.m.

Bible Class: Mid-Week.

It is good to hear of the improvement in health of all who have suffered in the past two months. At present we are able to look on the mountains covered with thick snow. The animals grazing in the fields shows us the great power that over-rides and makes provision for all.

We are thankful for the spiritual food, also of the faithful, in the last century. We trust we may be able to show our gratitude in our daily life, and be alert to the work of the Truth.

It is good also to hear of the increase to the Body of the young one from the Sunday School, now a brother, valuing the Truth before all else.

per D.L.

### **MANCHESTER: Ryecroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, Manchester.**

Sundays: Breaking of Bread: 11.30 p.m.

Bible Class: 7.30 p.m. in the ante room to large hall, Wednesday evening.

At the time of writing we are looking forward to the coming of Sister Glen and Sister Hazel. The intention is for them to make their abode in this place. This we shall greatly welcome and believe it will be a means of strengthening the Ecclesia here.

W.V.B.