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A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

"Take heed ye be not deceived"

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At the Table of the Lord

“The Doers of the Work”

THE WORD OF GOD has unfolded the history of the kings of Judah after the captivity of the ten tribes. It is God’s witness recorded for our help. First there was Hezekiah, a faithful king who trusted in Israel’s God, and so was delivered from the power of Sennacherib, the king of Assyria — the powerful nation that had taken the ten tribes captive a short time before. Because of Hezekiah’s faithfulness, Judah and Jerusalem were delivered; a further witness to God’s faithfulness and care.

Hezekiah’s son, Manasseh, reigned after his death. We perceive from II Kings 21:1 that Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign. This would indicate that he was born during the fifteen years of Hezekiah’s extended life given by God. We are told that he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem, and it was a wicked reign.

“ . . . He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord . . . ”
(II Kings 21:2)

As a consequence, disaster fell upon Judah and Jerusalem. We might wonder why an evil king was allowed to reign for such a long time. It would be a time of extreme testing for those in Judah and Jerusalem. Would any be faithful to their God in the midst of an evil time, an evil king, an evil world? Few would be able to endure, for any faithful ones undoubtedly would be ridiculed, persecuted, perhaps in danger of their lives. As the long reign of Manasseh came to an end, Amon, his son, reigned in his stead for only two years. He, too, was a corrupt king.

“And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father Manasseh did.” (II Kings 21:20)

He Did That which was Right

Then came Josiah, Amon’s son, to the throne of Judah. He was very young when he became king.

“Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem . . . ” (II Kings 22:1)

What a great responsibility for a boy of eight years! When most boys of that age were interested in play and games, Josiah had thrust upon him the rule over God’s people. There was something about Josiah that made him different from his father and grandfather before him.

“ . . . He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.” (verse 2)

Another spirit indeed; and, consequently, he was greatly helped and blessed of God. His thinking, his actions can be a help to us, brethren and sisters, if we can discern what moved Josiah, and directed him in this growth of spirit so pleasing to God. In II Chronicles 34:3, we read of his early life.

“For in the *eighth* year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to *seek* after the God of David, his father”

He would be sixteen at this time of great decision. *Seek*, we find, means to ask, make inquisition, to question or search. It implies an active, urgent work, a reaching out to fill a need which Josiah must have felt in himself. His efforts were careful and thoughtful, for we read,

“ . . . In the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images. And they brake down the altars of Baalim in his presence” (II Chronicles 34:3-4.

Here was a growth, an enlarged awareness of what God required; and, as a result, God greatly strengthened him in this work. He was only twenty years old when he acted to destroy the idols. We know how well pleased with his faithfulness God must have been, for we read how he was moved to continue yet further.

“ . . . *He burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars*, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem.” (verse 5)

We recall the prophecy against Jeroboam’s altar, 345 years before the time of Josiah. The man of God

“ . . . cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, *Josiah by name*; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men’s bones shall be burnt upon thee.”
(I Kings 13:2)

Here was Josiah over 300 years later, used by God, inspired by God, to accomplish His holy word. Remember, he was still a young man; yet having been taught of God and strengthened, he served Israel wonderfully, bringing righteousness once again to His people. Is not Josiah’s example a help to us, brethren and sisters? But wait — there is more! The record in II Kings 22:5-7 tells us that in the eighteenth year of his reign (when he was 26), Josiah caused the house of the Lord to be repaired. He said,

“Let them deliver it (money) into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the Lord: and let them give it to the doers of the work which is in the house of the Lord, to repair the breaches of the house.” (verse 5)

The house of God was neglected during the many years of Manasseh and Amon. Josiah, as he became more and more aware of God's power, God's mercy, saw the need to repair His house, and went about putting it right. This quickness on the part of Josiah can be a help to us, brethren and sisters. Are we aware? Are we growing in the work of His house? Are we striving to be the "doers of the work"? How must it be done? Verse 7 tells us:

"Howbeit there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt faithfully."

There was a care, a zeal, a dealing faithfully with the work as the realization came more clearly — this is God's house, and that He was watching and knew their hearts, their desire to be faithful "doers". There can be no doubt that their most conscientious and precise efforts would be there. The work would in every way honour God for whom it was done.

Not a Forgetful Hearer

This brings to mind James' words:

"... Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whosoever looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." (James 1:22-25)

Josiah must have slowly but surely come to a realization of how God looked upon him, upon Jerusalem; he began to see himself in the light of God's truth, and sought to change both himself and his people to become more pleasing to God.

Again Josiah can teach us. As we see him developing in God's ways, we can also grow, in care and in reverence; can give more honour to God; can be better doers of His work.

As the work of repairing the breaches of the house progressed, another event of great significance happened. We are told that the book of the law was found in the house of the Lord — found, no doubt, under God's guidance. That book had probably lain in the house of the Lord since the time of Hezekiah, having been forsaken by Manasseh and Amon. What was done with the book of the law? It would have been easy to look at it and say, "How interesting" — and then forget it. But no — there were doers, who looked "into the perfect law of liberty, and continued therein. . . ." This testimony of God was read by those who found it; and, it was then read before

the king. What was the result? Josiah, we are told, rent his clothes and sent his servants to “inquire of the Lord for me, . . . and for all Judah . . . for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book . . .” (II Kings 22:13). Josiah thus feared greatly, and sought God’s help. What had he read that caused this fear of God in his heart? We don’t know, but it may have been Deuteronomy 29:1-20:

“. . . Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt (verse 2) . . . Keep therefore the words of this covenant and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do. (verse 9) . . . Ye stand . . . all of you before the Lord your God . . . that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God . . . Neither with you only do I make this covenant . . . but . . . also with him that is not here with us this day . . . Lest there should be any among you . . . whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; . . . And it came to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart. . . . The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven.”

These words surely would have caused Josiah to fear and tremble, and to prayerfully seek the word of God through Huldah the prophetess. God told Josiah that he would be spared and delivered from His wrath:

“Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place. . . .” II Kings 22:19.

Josiah had grown in awareness, in love for God; and, so had become truly a doer of the work. He recognized more and more, as we must, what manner of man he was — needing forgiveness, mercy, and constant help. God caused him to read the law in order to help him, to teach him.

How Josiah must have rejoiced at the opportunity granted — to serve God, to better know how to please Him through the book of the law found in the temple. Perhaps he also read the words in Deuteronomy chapter 17, of the particular instruction given for the kings of Israel.

“And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book. . . . And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein *all the*

days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them.” (verses 18-19)

How wise this instruction! Would not Josiah in striving to be a doer of the work, quickly respond to what he read, and seek more help from God’s book of the law, realizing how needful it was for his spiritual life? How needful, too, for ourselves today, brethren and sisters, to keep that word of God before us — to read it each day, that we, too, may grow in a fear of the Lord, which will continually change our ways.

We have another example given to help us. Earlier in Judah’s history, Jehoiada the priest, set up Joash, the young boy, as king over Judah when the wicked Queen Athaliah was overthrown. The record in II Kings 11:12 tells us:

“He brought forth the king’s son, and put the crown upon him, and *gave him the testimony*; and they made him king, and anointed him. . . .”

In wisdom and in obedience to God’s instruction, Jehoiada gave Joash the law. We have that same testimony, that same witness to help us today. We remember how the book of the law, the testimony, was placed in the ark in accordance with God’s commands in Exodus 25:21-22:

“. . . In the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony. . . .”

The ark of witness — the testimony concerning Christ as the fulfilment of God’s law — a witness to His righteousness.

All Israel had this constant witness of God’s presence, of His grace, in their midst. David wrote of this in a Psalm of ascent, as being the place:

“Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.” (Psalm 122:4)

Then, brethren and sisters, as we read of Josiah’s growth toward becoming a doer of the work; and, in very spirit, as we see the help and blessing granted to him so abundantly, can we not be strengthened as we struggle to go up to Zion — to the testimony of Israel — God with His people? Do we seek to that book, that testimony, realizing it is our present life, our food, our hope, indeed, our salvation? What did the book of the law do for Josiah?

“Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, *when thou heardest what I spake . . . I also have heard thee, saith the Lord.*” (II Kings 22:19)

A hope, brethren and sisters, that we can look for, if the testimony of the God of Israel can reach into our hearts to make us grow in the fear of the Lord.
J.A.DeF.



Christadelphians then and now

THE HISTORY OF THE TRUTH throughout all time including the present is one of decline. This is indeed sad when it is realised how precious is *the* Truth, undiluted by any subversive notions. Once the “leaven” of error is introduced, however little, history shows that what happens in the natural takes place in the spiritual. “Leaven” in the body spreads and develops its corrupting influence, until the whole becomes leavened. The name may be continued; numbers may abound, but the inevitable result is that although the name that they live may be continued, they are *dead*.

It is no easy task to deal with those who are guilty of introducing “leaven”. They may be genial, affable and kind, but these qualities good in themselves are no antidote to the leaven; indeed, they are no more than the sugar coating to the poisonous pill, making this appear what it is not.

Nothing could be more clear on this that the apostolic declaration: “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

Error likened unto leaven, comes in various guises. In some cases an absolute denial of truth, but more often in the subtle appearance of truth masking error. Allow this to enter the Body, and unless checked and expelled (and this means the expulsion of those who refuse to repent) the Body is bound to become wholly corrupted. It may still claim the name, but the Spirit’s estimation is that they are *dead*. They may keep the form of the memorial feast, have lectures, gain numbers, but all this is to no purpose where there is no life in the body. And so we have seen this grow apace in those who once had *the* Truth. Soon instead of a strong belief in *the* Truth, and the application of its principles in the lives of those professing the Truth, “every man does that which is right in his own eyes.” The world once condemned is courted in various degrees. This brings us to the ordinance of *baptism* by which is the only means of becoming united to God through His Son. If we would grasp the solemnity and gravity

of this, let us consider how *baptism* into Christ as likened by the Apostle Paul to the “ark” by which “eight souls were saved by water”

“When once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing (one hundred and twenty years let us remember), wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even *baptism* doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 3:20-21)

“Condemned the World.”

Baptism is practised by some sects today who define it as a “washing away of sins”; but it is much more than this when properly understood. Baptism according to God’s Word is a burial into the *death of Christ*. This needs to be understood. It is important. The inspired Apostle Paul says:

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death.” (Romans 6:3)

Jesus died like any other human, but His death was very different from that of all mortals; for in his death he showed, although sinless, that God was just in condemning all flesh to death.

“God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” (Romans 8:3)

This was dramatically seen in the death of Christ. Nailed to a tree, He was condemned according to the Law:

“For it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” (Galatians 3:13)

It is doubtful if anyone outside the Truth can explain the justice of God in this condemnation (which was of God); for Christ never sinned, and in his mouth was found no guile.

Jesus experienced every temptation to which we are prone. As the Apostle Paul says:

“(Jesus) was in all points tempted like as we are, *yet without sins.*” (Hebrews 4:15)

Why then was he condemned? For there is no escaping the divine pronouncement concerning his death — “Cursed (or condemned) is every one that hangeth on a tree”. The usual explanation is that Jesus was condemned *for us*. True! But would God condemn one who did not deserve to be condemned to benefit others? God is always *just*. If condemnation were made, while it resulted in benefit to others, God would not be just unless such condemnation were merited.

This needs very careful consideration if we are to arrive at the right explanation. It could be thought that since Jesus had not sinned He could and should have continued living. This overlooks the

struggle in which Jesus was painfully engaged. In the Psalms we are permitted a peep into the secrets of His soul:

“Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.

But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

They are not in the trouble of other men (margin) Neither are they plagued like other men.

Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment. . . .

They set their mouth against the heavens. . . .

And they say, How doth God know?

For all the day long have I been plagued.

If I say, I will speak thus; behold I should offend against the generation of thy children.

When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; *Until* I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.” (Psalm 73 1-17)

A careful meditation on this outpouring of the heart of Jesus will help us appreciate the magnitude of his “overcoming”; and make us rejoice that we have a high priest “tempted in all points like as we are”; “*For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.*” What a valuable help as our supplications are presented to the Most High, through one who not only knows our frame, our limitations, but *feels* for us with “groanings which cannot be uttered.”

Everyone of us is conscious of our weakness, or our sins, but are we ready to “confess our faults one to another”? Pride prevents this. But we must learn to abase ourselves. Not easy; indeed the innate evil of ourselves will tend to resist any suggestion that we have been wrong. Here is the touchstone of a faithful heart. We do not mind being wrong. Here is the touchstone of a faithful heart. We do not mind being told how we may be “righter”; but resentment is soon felt and shown (which should not be) if we are told we are wrong.

In the One Body there will be no lifting up of self, no exulting in pride; but on the contrary a willingness to humble ourselves “under the mighty hand of God.” There will be no tendency to create a ruling by an “educated” hierarchy. Such are a danger. Robert Roberts received no university education, and wasn’t he the better for it! Education, advanced education has allowed the development in those professing the name of those who would be “lords over God’s heritage”. This is only seen in those who have departed from the truth; in the One Body such a development will not be allowed.

W.V.B.

Who is Like the Lord?

THE PROPHET MICAH was a man allowed to receive and speak the message of the Spirit to the children of God. The message for those who would hear at the time he spoke as well the message today is seen in the translation of Micah's name which means "Who is like the Lord?"

We find Micah's work was contemporary and similar to that of Isaiah's as their introductions state;

"The word of the Lord that came to Micah, the Morasthite, in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that is in it; and let the Lord God be witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple." Micah 1:1 and 2.

"The vision of Isaiah, the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Hear, O heavens and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." (Isaiah 1:1 and 2)

God's word through Micah as well as through Isaiah came to witness against the rebellious children of God. As is characteristic of the power of the flesh to rebel there had been a turning away from serving God. Yet, God's word came to condemn, to speak reproof and to remind what it was God required in His children to remain in covenant relationship with Him.

We are helped by Micah's words to take heed to these requirements of God *in order to guard against our flesh and its subtle working*. In Micah chapter 6 verse 8 we read what God requires of all His children — of Israel then — of us today if we truly hope to partake of His promise.

"He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Here are revealed the elements by which we can please God and look for His mercy to save.

Do Justly

"To do justly" is to come to a verdict, and comes from a prime root meaning to Judge. Implied in doing justly is the need for understanding the wisdom and knowledge of God's word, coupled with the ability to apply that understanding in order to come to a right

conclusion or sentence. We see this exemplified in Solomon's answer to God's question, "Ask what I shall give thee", 1 Kings 3:5:

"Give, therefore, thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad. For who is able to judge this thy great people? And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies, but has asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment, Behold I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." 1 Kings 3:9-12.

First and foremost in Solomon's desire was to do justly, and this pleased God. How different was the mind of those whom Micah came to speak, those who had the responsibility to do justly yet as Micah reveals did not.

"And I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel, Is it not for you to know judgment? Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from them, and their flesh from their bones; Who also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from them; and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and like flesh within the caldron."

(Micah 3:1-3)

"They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. Her heads judge for reward, and her priests teach for hire, and her prophets divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? None evil can come upon us." (Micah 3:10-11)

Yet God, who is just in all His ways and sees into the hearts of man (as He saw into the hearts of those He sent Micah to prophesy to), revealed His judgment.

"But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin. Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor judgment and pervert all equity.

Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest." (Micah 3:8, 9, 12)

How just is the way God works and deals with His children, that they might see His power and consider their position in His sight.

It is the same for us to consider today, "Who is like the Lord", who regards and is ever mindful of our ways before Him?

Love Mercy

How lacking in this requirement were those to whom Micah spoke as reflected in their actions recorded in Micah 2:1-2.

"Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! When the morning is light, they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand.

And they covet fields, and take them by violence, and houses, and take them away; so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage."

Revealed here is the result of failing to value one's position in respect to God's loving kindness shown in calling out a people to be His. Failing also, to value the basis of such a relationship made possible only through the long suffering of God. A further failure to reflect the love and mercy God has granted in establishing His house.

In order to love mercy, to reveal kindness, one must know mercy, have felt its extension and the comfort such affords. It is the mercy God's truth grants which must be loved and cherished. How often we find in the Scriptures mercy and truth combined as the example in Proverbs 3:3-4 reveals:

"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee, bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart;
So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man."

This makes us think of the breastplate positioned over the heart of the high priest containing the precious stones representing the twelve tribes of Israel. It reminds us of the covenant relationship — that He is our God and we are His people. Micah's words help us to regard this mercy as chapter 7 verse 18 tells us:

"Who is a God like unto thee, who pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy.

He will turn again; he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old."

Once again truth and mercy joined in reminding us “Who is like the Lord?”, who provides the means of reconciliation through His son, our high priest. It is the realization as I John 3:1-2 conveys:

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore, the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

Walk Humbly

Is it any wonder then, that the third requirement in light of the first two is to “walk humbly with thy God”? There can be no place for the flesh in the judgment and love of mercy God requires as spoken of also by Isaiah,

“For thus saith the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” (Isaiah 57:15)

True humility in our conduct is the revealing of our preparedness to submit to the hand of God upon us. It is through humility that we are prepared to hear the voice of God as Micah 6:9 says;

“The Lord’s voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name; hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.”

To “see thy name” was Micah’s message, so that all who heard him might regard God and His requirements, to say always from the heart, who is like the Lord?

Indeed, who is like the Lord?

M.C.S.



“Tempted in all Points”

THERE ARE THOSE WHO, without intending it, place themselves in antagonism to the testimony in affirming that, while Jesus came in the flesh, it was not in flesh “sinful in its tendency as ours”. The testimony is that he was “tempted in all points” as ourselves, which could not have been the case in the absence of the susceptibilities which some have denied. The very essence of temptation is susceptibility to wrong suggestion. The victory lies in the opposing considerations brought to bear. The truth of the matter does not depend upon the word “likeness” or any other single term, but upon the combination of statements made — which are all in language plain enough to be free from obscurity. At the same time it has to be pointed out that the word “likeness” in Greek has the force of resemblance so complete as to be sameness. This is illustrated in the statement that Jesus was made in “the likeness of men” (Phil. 2:7). The extent of the likeness is defined as extending to “all points” and “all things” (Paul’s words—Heb. 2:17; 4:15). What can we say but that he was a man, and not the mere likeness of a man?

But then, it is said, “Surely he was made superior to man in some respects”. Unquestionably. He was not a mere man — not a mere Jew — not mere flesh. He was the flesh of Abraham in a special form. Objectors will say that “a mere ordinary man would have failed”. True, but wherein did the extraordinariness consist? It is here where they get on to the wrong line. They make Christ of different stuff — “flesh not sinful in its tendency”. They should rather realize that he was the same stuff specially organized and specially used, having the same inherent qualities tending to temptation and death; but qualified to overcome both by the superior power derived from his paternity. Much of the difficulty in the understanding of this subject arises from a wrong assumption on what we may call the natural history side of human nature. It seems to be imagined that all human beings are necessarily on the same level of moral imbecility. This is far from the case, as we know from experience. All human beings would be equally incapable on all points if all were equally left untended from the cradle. They could all be speechless idiots without exception if suckled and cradled up by beasts, as has happened in rare instances. But the difference made by instruction and training makes all the difference in the world between two men both equally human: one shall be a stolid brute, and the other verging upon the grace and intelligence of angelhood.

But this is not the only difference. Though all men are equally human on certain main points, there are fundamental differences arising from parentage. Two boys — one an Indian cross-breed, and the other a European — may be brought up in the same family, sent to the same school, and will turn out totally different men — one stupid and barren and intractable, and the other bright and fertile and docile. They are both human, but they both differ radically. How fallacious it would be to reason from one to the other on the ground of both possessing a common human nature. They are both human truly, but humanity of very different qualities.

To say that Christ was a man partaking of our sinful nature does not mean that he was the same sort of man as other men. His parentage and education were both divine; and as it was said, “Never man spake like this man”, so it has to be said that never man thought as this man, or loved as this man, or felt as this man. He was a special man altogether, though as to nature the same; just as a special vase, got up and gilt for a royal table, is a different article from a common mug, though made, it may be, of the same china clay.

Importance of Understanding

It is important to understand these things, because they qualify us for acceptable approach to God, and they work out the right result in character and daily life. In dealing even with great men, you are unacceptable if you do not enter into the spirit and aim of their etiquette; how much more with God, who “taketh not pleasure in fools” and in men “that have no understanding”. In our approaches to *Him* in prayer, we must understand that though *He* is kind and gracious, *He* makes no compromise of the greatness of *His* way, but will be “sanctified in them that approach unto *Him*”. We must also understand that we can establish no claim; this passing by of our sins is the act of *His* forbearance; that no debt of ours has been paid or can be paid; that what the death of Christ has done has been to declare God’s righteousness that we may, by taking part in it, receive God’s free forgiveness through *Him*. Thus God in all things is glorified. The orthodox theology of the day generates an offensive spirit of presumption.

Effect on Character

So also do wrong views on this subject interfere with a proper development of character. The idea that Christ has borne our punishment and paid our debts, and that his righteousness is placed to our credit, and that all we have to do is to believe it, is demoralizing. It nullifies that other most important element of the truth, that the

unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, and that he only is righteous who doeth righteousness. It draws a veil over the truth that we have to "work out our salvation" by a "patient continuance in well-doing", and that he only that endureth to the end shall be saved. It undermines that most important testimony of the Gospel that Christ is the Judge of who is fit to be saved, and that he will impartially give to every man according to his works. These blighting results are to be witnessed in all communities where the doctrine of a substitutionary sacrifice and an imputed righteousness holds sway. Where there is any robust righteousness of character exhibited, where any true holiness of life — it is where the purifying truth is discerned, believed, and cherished in daily Bible reading and prayer. The truth is a beautiful and perfect whole. The sacrifice of Christ, at first a mystery to the natural mind, becomes lucid and glorious as a sunbeam of life and light. Enveloped in the clouds of false thoughts and theories, it is hidden as entirely from view as if it had never been preached.

The Final Triumph

The final triumph will show us at the end a generation of Adam's race brought from the grave, belonging to different ages, having lived in different circumstances, but all related to the same hereditary evil, and who all in their several days overcame by the same power, the power of the truth testified to them, and the power of God's will declared to them, and submitted to by them. They pleased God by their faith and submission, and Christ comes and gathers them all to himself. This is the final aim of the gospel, that all the children of God might be gathered together in one, and formed into one society, one family, all developed on one principle. No neutrals amongst them; all of them men and women of love, shown by the obedience of faith, all of them tried men and women, humble and humbled; not only invited to come as little children, but helped to be such by tribulation and chastisement; all of them then perfected, for death is obliterated as entirely from their nature as it has been from Christ's, whom God did not allow to remain in death more than three days, and then took him away to Himself, where he has been basking in the sunshine of His glorious presence. When Moses came down from the mount, his face shone; when Christ comes forth from the Father's presence, he will come forth resplendent with the Father's glory. His people will be gathered together to him; in his presence they will forget their sorrows. Is any grieving at the wrongs of the spiritual situation as it now exists? Wait — it cannot be otherwise at present. By and by we shall be introduced to a company, every one of whom will be a glowing ember of divine fire, every one a perfected son or daughter, with immortal nature, which disease can never touch,

which can never faint nor fail. Oh, the joy of identification with them! On the question of how they came there, their minds fix with one accord upon the central figure, and they say, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood: blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sits upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever". It is beautiful to look forward to; soothing and inspiring and encouraging and purifying. "The redeemed of the Lord shall come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads"; the joy everlasting, because pure, and based upon divine righteousness, which God Himself has given to us; first through Moses, and then through Christ, who shall at last be pointed to as having taken away the sin of the world, and all its evil consequences.

R. Roberts



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

“Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.” (Luke 21:26)

AT THE TIME OF WRITING Britain’s powers that be are experiencing great difficulty, and could soon be overthrown by the shaking events taking place. Government and opposition in the stately home of “democracy”, Parliament, have alike no real answer to the internal difficulties caused by labour confederacies in Britain. The government is being pushed along by the tide of events internally and externally. It hesitates to react, fearing that if it exerts its authority the labour situation will worsen.

It is in a great dilemma, knowing that internal policies, if weak could cause international monetary reaction of crippling effect upon the nation. But if it acts strongly, the “peasants revolt” could so get out of hand, the nation would be crippled anyway.

There is a fierce militancy amongst organised labour, who getting the feel of their new found power to disrupt the economy and the running of the nation, are setting their sights upon greatly inflated targets of increased remuneration for themselves, which would have been unthinkable a few decades ago. It is true that the masses have been suffering a mean and discreditable inflation which has eaten away insidiously at their resources. The cause of the soaring price of goods is from many sources, but from whatever cause externally or internally, it is a result of a general moral decline. Everyone desires, and clamours for a share, and more than a share, of what ever wealth may be available, whether by way of an increase of wage rates or by those who fix the prices of the goods they sell or deal in. This constant pulling at the economy and thrusting for more, and yet still not being satisfied, brings the tensions, frustrations and inflations that are a plague and a blight upon government and people of whatever class. All are affected in one way or another by this state of deterioration.

Britain, in microcosm, is a sign of how the world is getting out of hand, and of how the world will continue its decadent progress. The troubles which have come upon Britain show how quickly a people can bring themselves to standstill, and thereafter to doom, given the circumstances to fan the smouldering embers of their violence.

Children growing up in such an environment, cannot possibly for the most part perceive the benefits of the old values of honesty and restraint. They demonstrate the irresponsibility they have acquired from the example of their elders by the common and wanton vandalism being perpetrated everywhere. One of the most deadly weeds in the decaying world situation is the television system, which has found its way into every home almost without exception. This invention of science has brought bloodshed and violence into family life, not on occasion, but constantly, day after day. This clever invention takes peace from the homes where it exercises influence, even though the events depicted on the screen are in the main, only simulated. How can children brought up with such a tutor be encouraged to live law abiding and peaceful lives? How can men and women who are constant "worshippers" of this novelty live in placidity? Is it any wonder then, that the times have become more violent, and the nation's life more restless?

In Britain there is an organisation called the National Viewers' and Listeners' Association. Its very existence is only kept in being by the fact that the populace "views" and "listens". But even this association has been unable to hold its peace about what has now become so very obvious to any thoughtful person.

The national broadcasting system and the commercial ones have equally come under criticism. The N.V.L.A. has accused them of "failing in their public duty". Incidents of violence, obscene language and eroticism have been monitored, and the N.V.L.A. came to the conclusion that in the name of "reality" viewers were subjected to the foulest language and the most vicious of violence; as well as endless exploits not mentionable, of the main characters in certain programmes. The N.V.L.A. went on to say:

"We fully accept that programmes which show confrontation between criminals and the police will, upon occasion, contain violence. We do not accept that such violence has to be sadistic, nor that programmes should demonstrate that criminals are only apprehended by violent means. We believe the programmes... have helped to undermine public confidence in the police at a time of considerable social and political stress and that this is indefensible."

The world was so violent in the days of Noah God intervened to bring about a "savour of rest", as was acknowledged by Noah after the flood when:

"... Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

And the Lord smelled a sweet savour . . . (Hebrew: 'a savour of rest')."

(Genesis 8:20-21)

What then of today, is not God aware? What will He do now? The prophecy of Isaiah directs attention to what is God's view:

"The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: . . . And upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall. . . . AND UPON ALL PLEASANT PICTURES (Hebrew: 'pictures of desire') . . . the idols he shall utterly abolish."

(Isaiah 2:11-18)

So as strike follows strike, and attitudes harden in the most unlikely spheres of human life, where such behaviour would never have been thought of let alone seen at one time. Is this not a sign of the times? Does it not show in a most noticeable way that this devaluation in behaviour is akin to the devaluation of the currency which is insidiously robbing the thrifty? The "wheel of nature" turns full circle and fire is strewn in its path. All want more, rich or poor, master or servant, and are prepared to be violent about it, but they sow to the wind and reap the whirlwind. Hence the words of Jesus come to mind:

". . . upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity. . . ."

(Luke 21:25)

How apt are these words of Christ as they bear prophetically upon the present world situation. Seen particularly in microcosm in Britain at this time.

In context with His speaking of such a state of affairs which would confront mankind, Jesus added that when such distress and perplexity becomes evident:

". . . then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke 21:27-28)

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, and
Orchard Park. Alternate Week: Revelation Study.

As sore trials come upon some of His house, we are comforted in that His hand is ever present to guide, and to bring about the outworking for our greatest good.

Replies to the letter sent with the October REMNANT continue to come in, with many expressing anxiety over the questions and controversies which are prevalent in the Christadelphian body today.
J.A.DeF.

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.

On 8th January Sister Hazel Glenn was united in marriage to Brother Anthony E. Iago with the well-wishes of the Ecclesia in their journey Zionwards. There is a truth, perhaps seldom considered, that "he that findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and *obtaineth favour of the Lord.*"

Some correspondence has taken place with Christadelphians who receive the magazine. Copies of the booklet: "The History of the Truth in the Latter Days" have been mailed where requested, and so the witness continues hoping that some may be delivered from the latter-day apostasy.

W.V.B.

"PENTRIP", Black Rock, Portmadoc.

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

Bible Class: Mid-Week.

It is good to hear of the two sisters from America settling in Manchester, and all going on in order according to His guidance and in spite of the serious difficulties in the world.

We hope it will be possible to visit Manchester shortly and meet all face to face.

per D.L.