

APRIL 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"

"CHRISTADELPHIANS – THEN AND NOW"

"THE SIGN OF SPRING"

"ABIDING IN HIM – FROM A SUNDAY EXHORTATION"

"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

**“Let not your heart be troubled”**

**W**E HAVE LISTENED THIS MORNING to Jesus’ words, “Let not your heart be troubled.” How much these few words convey of His spirit and His love for His disciples, and for us. Circumstances were such that no doubt the hearts of His disciples easily could have been troubled. Jesus had told them that He would soon depart. “. . . I go to prepare a place for you.” (John 14:2) How easily they could be troubled at the thought of losing Jesus’ presence — at the prospect also of His suffering, being reviled, crucified, and finally dying. It was this fear, this uncertainty that Jesus sought to help. Yet Jesus Himself was troubled as He thought about what lay ahead for Him.

“Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.”

John 12:27

We know how He agonized in the garden, and got the victory over Himself.

“. . . Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.” Luke 22:42

Yes, Jesus was troubled, but His strength, His answer to that troubled spirit was “. . . not my will, but thine, be done.” Again, we read in John 13:21:

“When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.”

Here was great justification for His heart to be troubled; yet, through determination to do God’s will, through love for His Father, He put aside His anguished thoughts, and went on in that great work which was His — to get the victory over His flesh.

Can we then see with what perception Jesus spoke to His disciples, and to us — “Let not your heart be troubled”? How easily and naturally our hearts can be troubled. The word in the scriptures conveys the thought of stirred up or boiled, as waters which are not calm, but turbulent. Being flesh, we can easily become distressed, stirred up, or over-anxious. Because Jesus admonishes us against this, it must be that He knew it was not helpful but rather a hindrance for us. Do we not find it so, brethren and sisters, that when our heart is troubled, we may not think or react objectively or spiritually? What is the antidote to such a heart? Jesus provides it in His words,

“. . . Ye believe in God, believe also in me.” John 14:1

Also in verse 6:

“... I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

Do we believe this in our hearts? Believe that Jesus is our mediator, knows how our hearts can be stirred up, and prays for us, strengthens our hearts; and, in this way, prepares a place for us? What a comfort and help these words must have been to His disciples as He spoke before He went. They can be as helpful and strengthening to us, as our hearts are anguished by the many circumstances that try our faith.

**“... Believe also in Me”**

Do we believe in Him? Our answer may be, “Of course I do.” But do we believe sufficiently to realize that Jesus knows what troubles our hearts, and is able to assuage the troubles — able to make us realize that perhaps the stirring up of our hearts is a concern of the flesh? Do we realize, too, that if we can rise above that flesh, as Jesus did, if we can believe He will help, that troubled heart can be stilled, and brought to peace? Indeed Jesus made this very clear:

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” (John 14:27)

“My peace” — what a great blessing is this peace, which Jesus alone can give. He gives it not as the world gives; for gain, for prestige, for advantage, for favour, perhaps grudgingly. But He does it through the total giving of His life, and then by dying in obedience to His Father’s will. Through this life given, peace or at-one-ment is possible for those who are endeavouring to be the children of God. We remember Jesus’ words in John 15:13-14:

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

What is the result of that life given so freely by Jesus? Peace — and freedom from a troubled heart, from a heart that is afraid. Not that our hearts won’t be fearful or stirred up; but that there is a hope, a cure for a heart so afflicted — His peace. This has been God’s promised provision since the time of Adam. We read of the promise made to David who was a man after God’s own heart:

“Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. He shall build an house for

my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever." (I Chronicles 22:9-10)

A sure promise — "the sure mercies of David" — when the greater Son of David will bring these promises to fulfilment. If we truly believe that — "believe also in me" — and believe, too, in His work to bring peace, will it not help our hearts which can so easily be troubled, which so quickly fear; and, because of this, can falter in the way?

**"Peace be unto you"**

We remember how Jesus came to His disciples after His death. They were assembled on the first day of the week with the doors shut for fear of the Jews. Jesus said to them as He stood in their midst:

"... Peace be unto you . . . Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." (John 20:19-20)

They looked upon His hands and feet, the marks of the nails, and believed in Him. Later, Jesus came again once more saying, "Peace be unto you" as He stood in their midst. This time Thomas was present, who had said, "... Except I shall see . . . I will not believe."

How easily we, as Thomas, can fail to believe unless we see. We can allow a troubled heart to hinder our faith. After Thomas had seen the marks in His hands and feet, Jesus said:

"... Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."  
(John 20:29)

Thomas no doubt was present when Jesus had said to His disciples, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." And yet, when the test came, Thomas doubted; perhaps his heart was troubled, for a troubled heart can hinder that faith which sustains without seeing, without touching, without physical evidence to support it. If only we can believe with our hearts, brethren and sisters, how much greater blessings we can know!

As we are helped to a greater insight into the peace that is made possible by the work of the Lord Jesus — as we perceive a bit more fully how great is the blessing — may not our every-day living find a certain easement, so that hearts are not so easily troubled? Gradually there can come a more sure reliance on the Spirit, to help put aside the things which do stir up, and so hinder peace with God, and with one another; indeed, things which are destructive to the man of Spirit.

Paul helps us here as he instructs,

“Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” (Romans 14:19)

What are those things which make for peace? Paul tells us that they consist of that which builds up. Anything which fails to edify, then, we can assume, because it tears down, will hinder peace. We can bring many examples to mind of how a troubled heart can fail to edify. We think of Zacharias, as the messenger of God came to him in the temple to tell him of the impending birth of a son, to be called John. His reaction was — “. . . he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.” (Luke 1:12) Because his heart *was* troubled, Zacharias could not believe the message; and, as a result, was struck dumb until the child was born, and he himself named him John. When he was able to speak again, he spoke the words of the Spirit concerning the work of his son:

“To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” (Luke 1:79)

How blessed we are, brethren and sisters, to have the way of peace shown to us so clearly — to be shown how we must and can put aside the quick reactions of the flesh, which so easily can stir up our hearts and cause us to lose that way of peace. Paul’s instruction helps us in this struggle:

“Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.  
(Ephesians 5:21)

*To submit* involves the thought of subduing, putting into subjection. We know how difficult we find it is to keep self under subjection to the word of God, especially when we may feel strongly about a particular subject or question. Yet, if we are seeking to walk in the way of peace, submitting, deferring one to another, even if we may feel we may be right on a point which is not a matter of principle, how often we find help and blessing granted. Do we not find that those who seem unable to so submit or defer one to another are not really seeking the way of peace — and that this soon becomes evident?

In Moses’ time, we remember how he came to help his brethren, and found two Hebrews striving together. He said to the one who did the wrong,

“. . . Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?” (Exodus 2:13)

And the quick sharp response of one was,

“Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? . . .” (Verse 14)

How typical of those whose spirit is stirred up, who, being in such a situation, fail to submit one to another, and so lose the way of peace.

Into such a heart, peace cannot enter, for there is no room for it there, as that heart is uncircumcised — the flesh not cut off. How important it is, brethren and sisters, that our hearts be not troubled or afraid, but seeking that peace which Jesus so freely gives. To find it, to have our hearts yearning for it, do we not need to try to follow the example of the Lord Jesus? His heart was at times troubled, but He was able to overcome it, and go on to glorify God by His spirit of “. . . not my will, but thine, be done,” bringing peace — at-one-ment with His Father.

Jesus offers that same peace to those who can respond in love to His words,

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.” John 14:1.

It is only love for God, for His Son, and for those who are God’s that can make this come about. This love we show most of all by our caring for God’s people, our brethren and sisters. We have just listened to Jesus:

“. . . If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John 14:23)

Is this the means of at-one-ment that Jesus gives unto us — not as the world gives — and then exhorts:

“Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

These are not man’s words, but the words of our Lord and Master, making us appreciate more fully the help of James who recognized that:

“. . . The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then *peaceable*, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”  
(James 3:17-18)

Can we rise up to it, brethren and sisters, or perhaps differently expressed, can our hearts receive this wisdom from above; and, by this means, shall we be amongst that blessed people who may sow in peace with the Lord Jesus, in a time when nothing shall be able to trouble our hearts?

J. A. DeF.



## Christadelphians then and now

IT IS MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS AGO when those embracing the Truth, largely as a result of the work of Dr. Thomas, adopted his suggestion of a name — “Christadelphian”. As he pointed out at the time in dealing with the “powers that be” it is important for the believers to be known by a name. This proved so in America and has been of similar help in England and the Commonwealth.

Dr. Thomas was careful to point out that believers were not part of the nation in which they were born, but were separate from all nations, and a holy nation dedicated unto the Almighty. The exhortation by Dr. Thomas to the brethren was: “Let the devil fight his own battles.” and “Be not enrolled but go to prison rather.”

This brought grievous trials to the brethren in time of war. In England because brethren refused to fight, they were regarded as “enemies”. By not helping their compatriots who were suffering wounds and death in their endeavours to withstand a tyrannical enemy, they were scorned as indirectly helping the enemy. Acquaintances who previously passed the time of day when met in the street, ignored us with a contemptuous sneer. The weak in faith compromised by various means giving the impression that they were *part of* the nation in its fight. Some wore badges indicating they were making munitions; in the worst cases they “attested”. This gave them the “privilege” of wearing an arm band indicating they would join the forces if required. When their position was pointed out they replied that their work would keep them from being called up! They failed to see that by avoiding the reproach, they were giving up their alleged Lord and Master — Christ. Neither could they be sure circumstances would not change, and as some discovered, they were faced with a worse position than if they had been faithful, and were coerced into the non-combatant forces of the army. In some instances they soon transferred to the fighting forces.

One of the ways of avoiding the “reproach” was to take up some form of “service”. Some did in Birmingham and joined the Special Constabulary. Although not in the regular police force they were constables, under oath to serve their superiors, and empowered to carry a truncheon. Such a position was obviously wrong in two particulars: the taking of an oath, and their tacit agreement to use force if necessary.

When at a special meeting of the Birmingham Ecclesia there was a motion to withdraw from two who had joined the Special police

force this was notoriously opposed by two — Pearce and Davis — who argued that the principle had not been considered, and added to the Constitution, and further giving of no help of any kind to the country made the brethren “no more than parasites”. C. C. Walker, Editor at the time of the *Christadelphian* declared he had never heard the truth called in question in such a manner before, but when he found that the large majority were with opponents of withdrawal, he conveniently let expediency take the place of principle. When met by brethren of other ecclesias to take a stand for the right, he equivocated; said that the speeches of Pearce and Davis when properly understood were not subversive of the Truth. Asked to produce the speeches, he refused. Obviously a manoeuvre to avoid coming to the light, and hoping at the same time to stifle all enquirers. Brethren cannot continue walking together unless they be agreed. There was no agreement by many with Birmingham, and so eventually after much pleading and discussion, which proved abortive, division took place.

### The Division of 1923

Sentimentalists claimed a division was not necessary, and many were the excuses for the wicked speeches of Pearce and Davis. It was even said that Davis was not quite responsible for what he said, which his executive position in the world belied any such suggestion. Neither Pearce nor Davis would produce copies of their speeches, but a copy of Pearce’s speech was somehow obtained. The following extract shows how far he was away from the Truth in trying to justify service in the Special Constabulary:

“If a child struck its parent or teacher, do you think the parent would be justified in turning the other cheek and not rather in inflicting punishment for the good of the child? Now the city or state in essence is but an enlarged family with distributed duties and benefits.

For the repression of crime and the correction of the criminal, the police have been appointed. Morally there is no difference between the Father’s rod and the policeman’s baton. Both are equally good and necessary in the family and state.”

Pearce further ventured, much to his shame, to issue a circular in which he said “that if he knew of any brother thinking of joining the Special Constabulary, he would do his utmost to dissuade him, but if in spite of this he still joined, he could not accept the responsibility of withdrawing from him”. This shows how far he was astray on the doctrine of fellowship, proved still further that in his circular he said: “Fellowship I regard as an indissoluble link between man and his maker.” Again quite wrong! How could one in error, and

therefore walking in darkness claim fellowship with the Almighty? God's word is explicit on this point:

“If we say that we have fellowship with him, *and walk* in darkness, we lie and do not the truth.” (I John 1:6)

It is obvious there was already a division although not openly manifest. Surprisingly a large majority in Birmingham and elsewhere excused those in error — Pearce and Davis and their supporters, and hence when a Division had to be faced the leaven had spread that a majority were engulfed in the wrong. The Body was rent in twain; families were split, and much suffering ensued.

A further evidence of how Birmingham had become part of the world, was seen when Armistice Day fell on a Sunday, and they kept the two minute silence, which had been ordained by the “powers that be” in honour of the glorious dead! Such an event may seem unbelievable, but it is true, and was defended on the grounds of expediency.

The ecclesial world was much perturbed, convulsed by what was happening. Rather than face a division, with all that this means, in the loss of family and friends, various expedients were adopted. One was to pass ecclesial resolutions condemning the use of force and the joining of the forces of the Crown. This, however, was nothing more than the “daubing of the wall (of separation) with untempered mortar.”

It looked like division, but it was not. Hence, by brethren outside Birmingham after all efforts at reconciliation on a scriptural basis had failed division took place. Birmingham, the largest ecclesia, and in a sense the centre, failed completely. A mere handful out of some thirteen hundred came out, and stood for the Truth. The vast majority defended the wrong and were swept into the darkness by so doing.

#### **Suffolk St.**

This community of Christadelphians were already separate, having been carried away in the Inspiration Division of 1885. Their laxity was evident. They did not understand separation. On one notice board in the Manchester area there was the legend:

“Breaking of Bread 10.30  
Public Worship 6.30”

Comment is unnecessary to show how this disclosed an alliance with the “Public”, that is, with the world. They bore the name “Christadelphian”, but although it was a claim to be alive in Christ, they were *dead*. This should have been evident to the leaders in Birming-

ham, but when one, John Carter became the Editor of the *Christadelphian*, he tried, much to his shame, to amalgamate all claiming the name *Christadelphian* under one banner. He became the disciple of what might be called, *The Open Fellowship*. He toured the country and the Commonwealth in pursuit of this ignoble aim. To the careful observer the decline in spiritual standing in his many followers was very evident. In fact, there was no difference to be observed between them and the world. The world's amusements became their amusements, the world's associations became their association. Even on the *Christadelphian Magazine Publishing Company*, one of the so-called brethren, a director, was also a director of some seven companies in the world. To read the Articles of Association of the company (which can be done by anyone) at *Bush House*, London, is amazing almost to the point of incredulity. Here is a brief extract of some of them:

“Acquire and take over as a going concern . . . and to carry on the business now carried on at 21 Hendon Road . . . under the style of C. C. Walker, all or any of the assets and liabilities of the proprietor of that business. . . .”

“To carry on business as proprietors and publishers of the monthly magazine known as the ‘*Christadelphian*’ and of any books . . . relating or directed to the encouragement of *Christadelphian* doctrine or general Christian knowledge . . . !” (Note how this compromises the distinctive position of the Truth)

“To take or otherwise acquire and hold shares in any other company or association having objects altogether or in part similar to those of this Association, or carrying on any business capable being conducted so as to directly or indirectly to benefit this Association.”

“To accept with or without conditions and hold and administer gifts and bequests of real or personal property of any kind . . . to receive funds of money by voluntary contributions . . . payments by public bodies.”

It will at once be evident that this body, once the preserver of the Truth, and the bearer of His reproach, has become part of the world in the fullest and complete sense.

May it be that the devout reader will determine to leave the counterfeit and find the one and only Body of the Son of God.

W.V.B.

## The Sign of Spring

**T**O LOOK BACK UPON OUR SOJOURNINGS in the Truth, have not each of us at various times found the going to be difficult? The road has indeed had its rough places. To look ahead we see that our journey will not be any easier. The way to life everlasting is work and our strength at times seems small.

At these periods of weariness in our struggle on the path of life, our flesh attempts to pull down our spirits and causes within us feelings of despair. It is easy for our hearts and minds to be burdened by the pressures of our walk. This is the case if we fail to realize that God has called us together in our travels and knows the path before us. God is there to guide and direct our steps towards His promised place.

How powerful are the sign of God's hand about us to help. We can be encouraged and strengthened during our journeying together if we allow our hearts and minds to be perceptive. In Genesis chapter 1 verse 14 on the fourth day of God's creation He said,

“Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years;”

To think upon this aspect of God's handiwork is to comprehend that for close to 6000 years those lights have not failed. Distinguished has been day from night year after year, as the seasons have come and gone, witnessing to the unchangeableness of God.

This past month according to God's plan, another Spring season has come upon us. Undeniably, Spring is the most spectacular of seasons, and also the most figuratively significant of the overall purpose of God. Spring is a time of rebirth, renewed beauty and freshness. It speaks to us of all the goodness and purity of God's creation. If we can allow our hearts to perceive the significance this season portends, it can serve as a source of encouragement.

How much we need to be lifted up and beyond the routine cares of daily living. How much we need to keep our life's course in its proper perspective. To help us, Paul reminds us of our past, present and future in Ephesians 2 verse 1 to 8;

“And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins;

In which in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience;

Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love with which he loved us,

Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved),

And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;

That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

Each of us has experienced such a gift of God in the essence and likeness of Spring. Each of us have undergone a quickening, a making alive, a vitalizing, a new birth granted of God. We made a determination in coming forth from the waters of baptism to put aside barrenness for fruitfulness. This was the start of our struggle to follow in the path of Christ, a walk in the light of Truth designed to nurture our spirits to be like his.

In our walk, we have come to recognize how dangerous our flesh can be. Our flesh attempts at every opportunity to cause us to stumble. No flesh is pleasing to God. Paul again helps us in Romans 8 verse 9-14,

"But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

But if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

How clearly these words speak of the direction we must move. The time God gives must be spent in spiritual increase. How? By

allowing the Spirit of God to lead us. We must submit to the Spirit's lead in order to be God's children, for it is only the Spirit which can please God.

Let us examine ourselves as this Spring season reminds us that we are new — and throughout the remainder of our probation — as in the Spring. This time is given to grow in the way of life. Let us beware and not deceive ourselves for God knows if our growth is being guided by His care. Paul once again tells us in Galatians 6 verses 7 - 8:

“Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

This is God's justice exemplified. Both His goodness and severity revealed to make clear His promise. The rejoinder is verse 9:

“And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”

Can we see the wisdom of Paul's words? We must not lose vigor in following after our only opportunity for redemption. By “well doing” the result of spiritual growth is seen. We must not faint in this for to balk at the Spirit's constraint is to move astray and fail to follow the Spirit's lead.

Jesus did not fail. His vigor was persistent in following the Spirit's lead. How well aware we must be of Christ's position before us. Romans 6 verses 4-5 reminds us:

“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”

It is as Jesus tells us,

“... Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

... Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” (John 3:3-5)

This newness of life has been granted by God, made possible through Christ, to us and we must value it each day of our living.

This understanding of our Father always in mind, can help us when the cares of our life are struggling to overtake us. To walk in

newness of life is to consider each step we make before we move. It is to consider what will please God. This is the Spirit's way, Christ's way, the only way. We must be exercised by it.

We can look to David's example whose spirit had grown in the manner as depicted in his old age in Psalm 71 verse 18-21:

“Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not, until I have shown thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to everyone that is to come. Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things. O God, who is like thee?

Thou, who hast shown me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side.”

We can sense David's trust and abiding faith in God. “O God, who is like unto thee!” Indeed, there is none other than God who has given us His unchangeable word and signified it by His Son. We must value this, just as David did, in order to grow in spirit during our season of probation.

Let us consider then as we look about us this Spring the significance of our quickening and thus be encouraged in our determination to grow in spirit.

M.C.S.



## Abiding in Him — from a Sunday Exhortation

**T**HE EPISTLE OF JOHN, which we are reading, continues the sublime theme pursued in the gospel of John. A theme that is developed as in no other part of scripture in and around the 15th chapter of John. The particular subject in mind is that of abiding in Christ; what it means to abide in Him, and how we may do so. Looking first at John 15:4 we see the vitality of abiding in Christ.

“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.” (verses 4, 5 and 8)

The branches of a natural tree or vine draw upon the main stem for life-giving sustenance. Branches that are cut off wither and die, we well know as a general fact. So does it not become us in godly fear for our lives, to abide in Christ, whatever that involves, so that we can be fruitful unto God and glorify Him rather than be cast away to wither and die? So the great work before us in the terms of this scripture, is abiding in Christ, and He in us, with His Father. By this means we can be true disciples and glorify God; after which He will glorify us by His Son when He comes. The question is, What can we do now, today, and every day, to abide in Christ, when we are weak, made of earth, and have a nature that has no goodness in it, but plenty of evil ready to take over at any time? Fortunately we have not an earthly Master who expects us to be something that we are not, we would feel overwhelmed and we could not be sincere. However, there is a way that we can be better than we are naturally, and still be sincere. This is bound to take an effort on our part, but not more than we can give. The effort that we can make is that of submitting and obedience to what may not be our will but is the virtuous will of our Master. This essential part, which is ours, of submitting in obedience to a higher and better will than our own is outlined in 1 John 2:3-6:

“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk, even as he walked.”

Here in these last two verses is reference to abiding in Christ, showing the way it can be done. “Whoso *keepeth his word* — *hereby* know we that we are (abiding) in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk even as he walked.” As Jesus did always those things which pleased God, He thus abode in God, and God in Him.

Here is the marvellous way in which those having human nature can be something which they are not naturally, and yet not have to be actors pretending to be something that they are not. This is a wonderful arrangement that is divine and could not possibly work unless the divine Hand was behind such a change of character.

The beauty of the arrangement is that we do not have to turn on any virtue that we do not possess. All we have to do is have the inclination to find out what God’s will is, and then do it. This basically simple process is love for God and His Son. Dependant on our desire, is the essential help of God’s Holy Spirit to show us what His will is. Also, an integral part of this knowing God’s will with a view to doing it, is the fundamental requirement of repentance concerning those many times when we have failed to put into practice what we ought to have done.

That very telling verse 6 which we have just read:

“He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.”

This shows the far reaching extent of knowing God’s will and doing it: affecting our every day walk in life.

In that astonishing and moving account of Esther which we are now reading, we have, as it were, an object lesson on walking as Christ walked in the face of subtle temptation. The few simple points we wish to pick out in this story may help to show where the test really comes — for each one of us. It is not always the most obvious commands on which we are really tested, but often on the more subtle and less obvious choice between knowing the will of God, or turning a blind eye to it, in order to try and escape it. We note from chapter 2 of the Book of Esther that Mordecai was not Esther’s father, but her cousin, which technically could have given her an excuse for breaking away from his authority. However, if the desire is to do the will of God, we must not look for loopholes. Is it not the Spirit of God in which we must walk rather than the letter? Here, in this early part of this wonderful work of God is seen a great test of meekness for Esther. She must have known already that she was beautiful and attractive, before being selected for the short list of

those competing to be queen. When Esther seemed to carry all before her, having "Obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her", and was as it were swept easily ahead to be the king's bride, here could have been great temptation to think less of Mordecai's authority and instruction — one who was not even her natural father. However in verse 20 of ch. 2 we see Esther's desire was not to do her own will; not to be carried away with the conquest she had made, but yield herself in meekness to her step-father's good instruction:

"Esther had not yet shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him."

There is another little pointer in this chapter, which could easily be missed, showing Esther's desire not to do her own will but the will of her Father in heaven. Any normal bride would like to commend herself to her husband and not least the new Queen to the King of the Medes and Persians; specially knowing that a queen could fall out of favour if she put a foot wrong. So in verse 22 we have a glimpse of the choice between the will of the flesh and the will of God, in which Esther chose the latter: concerning the conspiracy between two of the King's chamberlains to lay hands on him: "And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king thereof in *Mordecai's* name." Esther need not have mentioned Mordecai's name, but taken the credit herself for exposing the plot against the King, but giving the credit to Mordecai later returned more glory on her than the glory she would have gained from the King by taking the credit herself.

These are the simple every day life temptations in which we can keep God's Word and so abide in Him. If we do manage to rise above the flesh in these frequent day to day temptations; this is walking as Christ walked, and God is glorified thereby.

Later in the story came the more dramatic and momentous choice when Esther had to risk her life to do the will of God. She had the help of some very plain speaking from Mordecai, and so managed to show that great submission out of love for and trust in God, which was the equivalent of abiding in Christ.

So we can see that even in this temporal story of Esther's meekness and self-denial, preferring God's will, her good works, and those of Mordecai returned for them an earthly glory.

If they continued to walk thus, even as Christ walked, seeking for and abiding in the will of God, then we know that their earthly glory which passed away, could be raised to a spiritual glory with Christ and all those similarly minded; a glory that will never fade.

A.E.I.

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

**“Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them . . .”** (Ezekiel 38:5)

**“Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish . . . shalt  
say . . . Art thou come to take a spoil?”** (Ezekiel 38:13)

**W**ITH SHOUTS OF TRIUMPH and milling crowds of supporters, the Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Persia; and ruthlessly the influential men who had supported the now exiled Shah have been executed.

As a result, work on all the major contracts in which British companies have been involved with Persia, have come to a halt; estimated to have had a value of about two thousand million pounds.

This has been a remarkable and abrupt turn of events, but there has been another amazing happening, though perhaps not so immediately striking. The Queen of Britain who had originally been scheduled to visit Persia, carried on with her three week visit to the Middle East, her first time in that area of the world. Speedily the Queen arrived through the medium of the fast travelling airliner “Concorde”. The first stop at Kuwait found the Emir of Kuwait there to meet her, with Arab princes in gold and brown robes, women in purdah (veiled attire) and a multitude of ambassadors. It was very evident that this was a great welcome for her; flags were everywhere, and there had been a careful planting of greenery in the dusty soil. With a twenty-one gun salute and the playing of the two national anthems, the royal party drove off to the Royal yacht, which had sailed in advance into the Persian Gulf, there to await her arrival. Soon the Queen’s party and the Emir were feasting together.

A point of interest worth noting, is that Kuwait not only lies at the head of the Persian Gulf, bounded on its northern frontier by Iraq, and quite close to Persia’s oil centre Abadan; it is also not enthusiastic about the support for the Shi-ite Moslems in Persia. This perhaps needs more explaining. There has been a division in the Islamic world since the seventh century. After the death of Mohammed in the year 632, some said Mohammed had instructed that Ali, his son-in-law, was to be his rightful successor. Others however favoured Abu-Bakr, who became the first caliph, that is, representative of Mohammed, and he was followed by two other caliphs before Ali finally succeeded to the position. But this order of things had opened a breach.

Those who did not recognise the first three caliphs became known as Shi'ites. The others who had not recognised Ali were called Sunnis, and these two sects have fought each other for centuries. Now in Persia the official religion is Shi-ite, but this is the only Moslem country where the Shi'ites have the ascendancy. The Sunnis are the orthodox Islamites, to which nine tenths of all Moslems belong. This is a factor which doubtless has had a significant influence upon the present Middle Eastern situation, though stemming from differences of leadership of so long ago.

From Kuwait the Queen and her entourage serenely went upon her way to the next place of call, Bahrain. All along the coastline, Arab fishermen scrambled among the rocks by the water's edge to see the Royal Yacht *Brittania* sailing by. Popularity indeed; propaganda taking a delicate form, but having a great impact!

When the Queen stepped down from the Royal Yacht, there was the Amir of Bahrain holding out his hands to receive her. Splendidly attired in white robes and gold, and carrying a scimitar. Bahrain, an island lying just off the Arabian coast in the Persian Gulf, is about the size of Britain's Isle of Wight. But far, far richer and more important due to its oil revenues. There had been considerable preparation, traffic roundabouts and traffic lights had been erected where there had been none before. Soon the Queen and her husband were at a reception at the Amir's palace which has a great dome of gold upon its roof. Bahrain was rich in gold, pearls and ivory in ancient times, and still has a potential for exotic shrubs, which the Queen found out as she walked about the gardens where beds of sweet basil were spread out and bougainvillea scented the air. Peacocks also strutted these gardens giving their own display of colour. The history of the place was pointed out, when the royal visitors went to view the site of the ancient city of Dilmun, dating back, so it is said, to the time of Abraham.

From Bahrain the Queen flew to Riyadh, the seat of the Saudi Arabian rulers. Showing care for the sensitive Islamic outlook, so pronounced in Saudi Arabia, she wore a long flowing dress and long sleeves. The King of Arabia was pleased and so were the five thousand royal princes, and there was a marked exhibition of great enthusiasm from the robed populace.

The Queen's tactful approach in the dress she wore certainly was propaganda of the first order. This was the first time a female sovereign had been entertained by the King; and he saw to it that the entertainment was fit for a Queen. All day long refrigerated vans sped up and down the desert highways with more and more delicacies, their destination Riyadh, a city which has grown out of a desert due to wealth derived from oil.

From Saudi Arabia the Queen went on to Qatar, fabulously rich, having great revenues, but a population of only two hundred thousand. This peninsula state is a dusty place, but for weeks before the Queen's visit the people had been washing the trees in readiness for her arrival by Royal Yacht at the harbour in Doha. At the zoo there had been six weeks of considerable activity, to have on display the renowned Oryx, the graceful white antelopes of Arabia. At the place where a race meeting had been arranged, sixty thousand metres of turf had been planted by hand, and continually watered.

Then on to Abu Dhabi by air, and what a welcome! The Sheikh who had met her, suddenly left her side and joined in some Bedouin folk dancing. Whirling around in brown, gold-trimmed robes, he swayed to the sounding of drums along with old and young men of the desert, turbaned, bearded and holding camel sticks. This ceremonial was a Buraimi oasis, rich in flowers and trees of fragipani, oleanders, bougainvillea and various shrubs. This arrival was escorted by hundreds of racing camels, which only stopped when the party arrived at the runway, the place of their arrival.

From Abu Dhabi and Dubai, of the United Arab Emirates, on to Oman, and it was from Muscat, in Oman, that the Queen flew back to England in a V.C. 10 loaded with gifts of precious stones, pearls and gold given to her by the rulers of the desert. These rulers had been charmed by this visit of Britain's Sovereign.

Russia may be the King of the North, who now has Persia turning to him, but the Queen's visit has shown that she is the Queen of the South!

D.L.



## News from the Ecclesias

### **EDEN, NEW YORK: Grange Hall, Church Street.**

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m. Sunday School 1.30 p.m. Bible Class: Mid-week — Forestville, Buffalo, and Orchard Park. Alternate week: Revelation Study.

The Sunday School party was a very happy occasion, enjoyed by all present.

Letters continue to trickle in, giving opportunity to continue the witnessing.

J. A. De F.

### **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.

We are looking forward to the first fraternal gathering of the year on Monday, April 16th when it is hoped to see brethren and sisters assembled from far and near. to partake of this feast.

Correspondence continues in a small way with some who once had the truth and it is hoped in the mercy of God will find the pearl of great price which cannot be divided between many sects.

W.V.B.

### **“PENTRIP”, Black Rock, Portmadoc**

Breaking of Bread: Sundays, 11.30 a.m.  
Bible Class- Mid-week.

As spring approaches we look back on the severe winter with gratitude that we have been allowed health and strength.

The comfort of His Word with its sure promises is a great blessing and also the work of the brethren in the magazine is greatly appreciated. We trust in the coming months we shall be able to meet all who visit Wales.

per D.L.