

SEPTEMBER 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

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At the Table of the Lord

“The God of All Comfort”

THE WORDS OF PAUL written to his brethren in Corinth, who found themselves in difficulties, can help us greatly, brethren and sisters. Paul himself was sorely beset by trials and problems; yet, he turned to the only source of help he knew, and found there the needed strength to go on in the struggle to please God. His spirit, his help has been preserved for us in this his second letter to the brethren at Corinth. Let us, then, turn to these words as we, too, may seem surrounded with problems, tribulation, sorrow. He wrote:

“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.”

(II Cor. 1:3)

This is how Paul looked unto God and blessed Him: “The God of all comfort,” “the father of mercies”. Let us think about this. “Comfort”, we find, comes from two words, meaning, “to call near” or “alongside”. When we are cast down, disquieted, in need, and one calls us near to them, what a help, what a solace we find in this act of love. When it is God who calls near to Him, the One who is the God of all “calling near”, what an even more powerful help it should be to us. When we consider too that the One who comforts is the “Father of mercies”, are we not further encouraged? Having mercy means to have compassion on, to suffer with. God is totally the Father of “compassion” in that He sent forth His Son to save those who turn to Him in the hope of escaping from death. He is, indeed, the God of *all* comfort, not just on one occasion, not just one kind of comfort, but *all* comfort, no matter what our needs may be. The Father of mercies, the God of all comfort is there calling us near in compassion to strengthen. Do we, brethren and sisters, always recognize this? Do we always seek the comfort available, the God-given mercies that are extended unto us?

“Except ye . . . become as a Little Child”

Perhaps we can remember as a child how we may have fallen down and been hurt. We cried. Who came near to help? Our mother or our father, and they comforted us, helping to put away the hurt. Why did they do it? Because of love. We knew where love could be found

and cried out for it in our pain, our fear, our need. Can we, then, reach out in the same way today, as we are older, stronger, more mature, perhaps feeling less need. When we *are* in need, do we, recognizing the perfect love of the Father, turn to Him for comfort remembering Jesus' words:

“. . . Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:3)

As we face, in this life, many trials, great distress, deep sorrows, how much we do need that comfort, strengthening, encouraging, and what more perfect source can be found than *the* Father of mercies and *the* God of all comfort? We *know* this as a truth, but when trial comes, do we truly, as a little child, indeed, run to Him, crying out in our need? Can we see why our brother Paul wrote: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . .”? “Blessed”, we find, comes from a word meaning “to extol” or “to speak well of”. Is this our mind, brethren and sisters, as it was Paul's, to bless God for all *His* blessings toward us.

How very true it is that when we find ourselves in extreme distress and uncertainty, we feel the greatest need for being called near to the One who can so fully comfort. Paul continues: “Who comforteth us in all our tribulation. . . .” What great tribulation Paul experienced, but through his seeking, he knew the help of God, his Father, working to make him a better child, a closer brother of Christ. He tells us the result of his being so comforted:

“. . . that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.” (II Cor. 1:4)

It is not a one-way street, not merely a receiving of comfort, but with that should come a responsibility — more, a desire to help others, as we have been helped, and so a closer binding of all those who call on the Father of mercies and God of all comfort. Do we react like that, anxious to comfort as well as be comforted, to show mercy as well as receive it? Is this not a part of the selflessness that the Truth and its power brings into our living? As we go through certain experiences, anguish, trials, sadnesses, loss, and yet are even so lifted up, does it not make us *want* to call near any who may be in the same circumstances, the same need? If so, how pleasing to our God, and we will be able to know even greater blessing, greater mercy, greater comfort. In addition, and perhaps most important, is this one way we may by our actions say:

“Blessed be . . . the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;”

“The Lord is my Shepherd”

Comfort is not always something we may naturally delight in, for we know it may involve, at first, a chastening. David knew this, and writes of it for our help in the 23rd Psalm. Here is the response of a grateful heart. A Psalm of *blessing* the Lord.

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” (verse 1)
How many people know these words; yet, how few really have received and rejoiced in the God of all calling-alongside. In verse 4, we read:

“... Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”

A good shepherd’s rod and staff are used to direct, to protect, to lead, sometimes to snatch from danger, sometimes to chasten, but always in love. Can we, then, brethren and sisters, as the sheep of His pasture rejoice in the presence of our Shepherd, that He, in wisdom, uses the rod and staff to comfort? If we do not love the Shepherd, His rod and staff can be an irritation, a restraint, a hindrance to what *we* may want, and we may seek to avoid it by being on the outskirts of the flock. If we are truly seeking His comfort, even though it may involve chastening, won’t we as His sheep seek to be close to Him, feeling our need for the protection of His rod and staff, coming to depend on them as we experience His love in all our struggles? David’s conclusion was:

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”
(verse 6)

David was one who knew great tribulation and great sorrow. He could, through the help received of his Father, be close to his Shepherd. Are we, then, encouraged by his words in this Psalm, to feel more surely

“The LORD *is* my shepherd; *I shall not want.*”

“God . . . Comforted us by the Coming of Titus”

How we are lifted up, brethren and sisters, in our trials, even as Paul was and who is, therefore, able to help us so effectively. In II Cor. 7:5 (and 6), he shows another way that comfort can be granted:

“... when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears.”

Truly, it must have been a desperate situation for our brother. Perhaps an inkling of the "fears within" is found in II Cor. 13:1:

"This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."

Yet, help came:

"Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforteth us by the coming of Titus;

"And not by his coming only, but by the consolation (comfort) wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more." (II Cor. 7:6-7)

How much comfort is granted in the coming of those of like precious faith, who have also suffered tribulation, and, knowing the comfort of the Father, can come alongside in our need. We have very tangible evidence of this great blessing in our midst here this morning. Our Father is, indeed, the God of all comfort, and are not the bonds of His house drawn ever closer by the mutual comfort and mercy we both need and receive?

Jesus, who knew the comfort and mercy of His Father so fully grants strength as He did to His disciples when He was about to be crucified.

"... I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another *Comforter*, that he may abide with you for ever;

"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

"I will not leave you *comfortless*: I will come to you."

(John 14:16-18)

What care! What infinite love and compassion Jesus shows for those who know Him and receive Him. "I will not leave you comfortless." "*Comfortless*" means "*without a father*". In the natural, this we have all seen is a pitiful state, but how hopeless and tragic we would be without the "Father of mercies and the God of all comfort"; and how wonderfully provided for we are to know and to have Him.

This, Paul, also had in mind when he wrote to his Hebrew brethren:

"... God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

"That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation (comfort),

who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

“Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

“Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever. . . .” (Heb. 6:17-20)

What power in these words, power to steady and inspire us! How truly He said, “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” He does; He has; He will in every need through the “Father of mercies and the God of all comfort.” Is this hope, then, an anchor for us, brethren and sisters, stabilizing, securing, keeping us from drifting in the storms of tribulation and trial? Jesus is now within the veil, in God’s presence, our High Priest, knowing our every need and beseeching the God of all comfort on our behalf. How few can know this hope, this anchor. Let us, then, respond in heartfelt gratitude along with Paul

“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . .”

J.A.DeF.



Christadelphians then and now

THE PURPOSE OF THESE ARTICLES is not to criticise, but to help any who realise that the position of Christadelphians is not what it was. There is no doubt that declension has taken place; apostasy from the position once so vigorously held.

When there is a "falling away" from the Truth, it is perhaps superfluous to ask: "To where does such go?" There is only one answer. Leaving the light inevitably results in going into the darkness: and let it be realised the sad result is the loss of salvation only promised in the light.

Present Christadelphians say Dr. Thomas were too narrow and severe, and consequently his writings are not regarded favourably by modern Christadelphians. But who has changed? It is obvious that the writings of Dr. Thomas which were held in such high esteem by former Christadelphians are now regarded as too critical, and not sufficiently appealing to those of the non-conformist sects. Let Dr. Thomas speak for himself:

"My earnest desire is to see developed in Britain a people who shall be separate and distinct from all others; the foundation of whose distinctiveness and separation shall be *the intelligent belief and obedience of the truth*, not mere opinionists and speculators, but a people in whom is 'full assurance of faith', and 'full assurance of hope'. Such a people would be a 'people prepared for the Lord'. The 'religious world' so-called, is the apostasy foretold by Paul. A people prepared must be separate and distinct from this in faith and hope and love. There can be no identity and sympathy between them. We cannot fraternize with the religious world and be prepared for the coming of the Lord, who comes to destroy it. A prepared people are Christ's brethren, and rejoice in this exclusive relationship, and none is entitled to this high position but those who do the will of the Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 12:50)

Here is a startling thought for minds sensitive to God's revealed purpose to cleanse the earth of all counterfeits of the Truth. Where the Truth is intelligently received and profoundly believed then there is bound to be a marked separation from all its counterfeits. A little consideration of how Jesus regards these will help to an appreciation of their true position. The great sect claiming to be the leader of all Christendom is spoken of by Jesus as "the great whore that sitteth upon many waters". No description could be more vivid of how such a system is viewed by the Son of God. It is difficult to realise of how

the head of this system claiming to be "The Pope or Father, the King of Kings, and the Vicar of Christ upon the earth" could be so influential in the earth; but the Lord Jesus helps by telling us that it "deceiveth the whole world". These words are more true and have a wider application than is realised.

Protestants used to protest against this system in a very vigorous manner. A little more than a hundred years ago images of the Pope were burnt in England, and the popular cry was "no more popery". Now the position is entirely different. Many protestants who do not believe in the Catholic dogma are prepared to acknowledge the Pope as a great Christian leader. Consequently many great leaders of Protestantism visit the Vatican, offer their oblations, but do not protest. This attitude of the different Protestant sects may be described as "agreeing to differ". A parlous situation indeed, and one in which the voice of *the* Truth cannot possibly be heard. It is not generally realised how subtle is the policy of the Catholic hierarchy. When they are in the minority (as in England) then they declare that everyone must be allowed freedom of worship; but as soon as they are in the majority all opposition is persecuted and oppressed as in Spain.

One greatly mistaken author, George Borrow, thought he could at least raise a protest in Spain, and gain some profound respect for the Bible. How mistaken he was as his book (now regarded as a classic) "The Bible in Spain" reveals. Nowhere in spite of much travelling and much effort was he able to induce any respectful authority for the Bible. Catholics give lip worship to the Bible, but regard their Church as *the* authority.

"Call no man father upon earth" (Matt. 23:9)

This is a clear command which millions disobey to their cost. The Lord Jesus knew full well what would result from such a practice as calling clerics "father". Their position would be exalted as "lords" over their flocks. Their greatest cleric is called "Pope" — meaning "father". The result is that millions are duped into submission. The word of the "father priest" is regarded as the word of God. Unless observed at close hand the consequent deception and oppression cannot be understood.

A visitor to a widow found her in tears. Asked what was the trouble she would not say. In reply to the question "has the father been?", she said "yes", and when she said she had nothing to give, she was asked "have you nothing to pawn?". Difficult to believe that such cruel oppression is true, but it is true and represents the attitude of the so-called "fathers".

Another oppressive trick was discovered by accident. Picking up a paper in the street it was found to be a letter from the "father priest" to one of his flock. In it was stated that while some thousands had been received the contribution of the one addressed was only a few pounds! How many of these letters were sent out is not known, but the effect of the communication can be imagined. A failure to give what was the due demand; remorse no doubt that such a failure was against the "Father in heaven" because it was done to one who was acknowledged as a "father upon earth".

As a result of the unspairing labours of Dr. Thomas the Truth was delivered from the poisonous venom of this imposing and numerous "Christendom" — so called. It is difficult, but not impossible to realise that a huge system which the Lord Jesus describes as "Babylon the great" has grown up under the specious influence of regarding and addressing her priests as "father".

How can there possibly be any fraternising with such or with any of her harlot daughters, which Jesus makes clear in the most vivid language He will destroy at His return. His description of this system with all its "names" He terms "Babylon the great", a confusion as the word "Babylon" implies. Shelves have been filled with books, called papal encyclicals, but these instead of making clear what the "Church" teaches, have made confusion worse confounded. How false is the claim, and stupendous the ruin, resulting from the belief that when the Pope speaks "ex cathedra" his utterances are infallible.

The Harlot Daughters.

Not a very complementary description of the sects which have derived their origin by protesting against the evils of their "mother" — Babylon the great. Now a great change has taken place. Their "protesting" which earned for them the appellation — "Protestants" — no longer protest. Although they may not concur with the dogma of their mother, they have come to respect her, and the relationship between them and the leading sect of Christendom is vividly described as "daughters"; but the prefix "harlot", although unsavoury clearly defines their position as being illegitimate offspring, and not entitled to any claim as being God's children, and Christ's brethren. The fact that they are numerous may deceive the unwary; but it should be remembered that those in *the Truth* are the "sect everywhere spoken against", and do not commend themselves to the earthlings who look for the kind of "consolation" which flatters them in their present ungodly position, and boast of their numbers. When Dr. Thomas broke bread with those in the Truth in the early days in Huddersfield there were only six sitting round a board over a baker's

trough in an upper room. Where numbers are large, and meetings appear thronged the doubt must be: "Can they have the Truth?" Robert Roberts was not unaware of this deception, and was against large meetings. (as the writer can prove from a letter in his possession written by his daughter) Dr. Thomas was fearless in his testimony to the Truth, and it mattered not whether the audience called to hear the Truth was a mere six or six hundred. All that mattered to him was that *the* Truth might be proclaimed in a simple and forthright manner, and that the surrounding sects claiming Christ might be exposed as devoid of *the* Truth. Christadelphians at one time shared this honoured work; but now an incredible change has taken place showing how they have departed from the Truth.

One of their spokesmen and writers speaks of cooperation with the Bishop of Woolwich, the author of the ungodly book — "Honest to God". He claims to be endeavouring to cooperate with him (!) in endeavouring to rescue some from impending disaster. Whatever would the old-time Christadelphians have thought of such a suggestion. Their denunciation of the harlot daughters was as strong as that of Dr. Thomas. Their appeal was "To come out and be separate and touch not the unclean." This did not make the Truth popular; but when popularity overwhelms the Truth, it is no longer the Truth. How can *the* Truth be popular when its divine message is to condemn all counterfeits, show that in the flesh dwells no good thing, and warns that the Lord Jesus is coming to destroy the many sects whose profession of Him is a sham, and false.

(to be continued)



A Ministry of Love

AS WE STUDY THE MINISTRY of the Lord Jesus, we see how He sought to teach and to lead His followers in the path of righteousness. How much help we too are given to be brought closer to Him and our Father through that ministry.

We must remember that it was out of love that Jesus came. A love for His Father and His Word, a love for those He taught, a love which endured throughout all His works. This love enabled Him to fulfil all that was written of Him in the law and the prophets. Jesus, out of that love, teaches and instructs us on this account in Matthew 5 verse 17-19 where we read His words,

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

How clearly this speaks to us, of the purpose of God in sending His Son to fulfil the law, that law which we know was given to be a schoolmaster to bring to Christ for those who could see in it, the spirit of Christ and reflect in their living His righteousness.

Many during this time must have thought themselves righteous, keeping the letter of the law, such as the Scribes and Pharisees. But Jesus' warning was, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, (really go beyond to the spirit of the law) ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 5:20) The righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees was obviously *not* enough to maintain the hope of everlasting life, rather their paths were misleading them into death without hope.

The Strait and Narrow Way

Jesus further instructs us along similar lines in the words of Matthew 7 verses 13 and 14 where He tells us,

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

Can we discern the instruction given here by Jesus to help us? We are told there are two gates, one wide and one strait. Also there are two ways, one broad and one narrow. Further, there are two ends, one destruction and the other life. Finally, there are many that enter into destruction by the wide and broad way, but few that find life by the strait and narrow way. There can be no doubt through which gate a closeness with God can be achieved. Jesus tells us "enter ye in at the strait gate" and further in Luke 13 verse 24,

"Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

To enter, we must recognize requires a striving, a struggle and contending with the power of our own flesh, which attempts to crowd obstacles in our path to hinder us and turn us out of the way of life, into the wide and broad path which unrighteousness travels. How difficult we have found this struggle is to overcome these obstacles, for the way is indeed hard, and the entrance not easy, yet by these trials we should come to know and appreciate why so few find it.

Power of Prayer

How needful it is for us to come and be taught by Jesus, as He is the only one who has succeeded in perfectly entering through that strait gate. Jesus reminds us of the help that can be ours in the difficulty of putting down the flesh in His words spoken to us revealing the power derived from prayer. Matthew 7 verse 7 tells us, "Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." How close to us is this means of help through prayer. How often we must remind ourselves of the strength, guidance, and comfort that prayer can afford, if we believe and faithfully trust, that we can be helped. In Mark chapter 11 verse 24 Jesus confirms this, stating,

"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them".

When in difficulties, in temptation, we must call upon God through prayer to be sustained by His closeness believing that help can be granted, according to God's will to keep us on the right path.

The example of Jesus' life, of His agonizing in the struggle to put down His flesh, clearly shows us how close God's hand can be to help. God is always there, ready to reach out and strengthen when called upon. To clearly point this up, we have only to consider the dire circumstance of Jesus in the garden before His death, where we read in Luke 22 verse 42 Jesus prayed to God saying,

"Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."

God was there to hear and to help, for in verse 43 and 44 we read,

“And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”

Jesus' spirit was thus strengthened and He was able by that help given Him to endure His hardest trial until it was finished and He cried “Father into thy hands I commend my spirit”. How perfect was that spirit revealed by Christ, a spirit strengthened by God through prayer, a spirit seeking to submit and which in turn was well pleasing to God.

Because of Christ's victory, we have been granted the assurance and comfort as spoken of by Paul in Romans 8 verse 26-28,

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

How great a provision is this, to always have close at hand on our behalf, but it is there, only as long as we strive in faith to partake and value the fellowship of love we have been called into. If we do, we are assured the Spirit will be there to guide and direct us in every circumstance.

We each have known this help, and do know it. It is certainly a sobering, if not terrifying thought to ponder the utter hopelessness of striving to overcome our flesh, and all its obstacles, without the Spirit's intercession to point the way to life. Without this help, all hope of being delivered from death ceases.

Yet, the danger of this loss is ever possible as clearly brought out by Paul to the Galatians in chapter 3 verses 1 — 5 and 11-14;

“O Foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish

having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

(verses 11-14)

But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

These words of Paul help us to remember the means by which we as Gentiles have come into the close fellowship of God and Christ — through the spirit of God's Son sent into our hearts to there work faith in us. Yet, this provision can be forgotten, reverting to the natural course of things which strives to make itself justified, refusing to submit to the Spirit in which all are called.

How much then we need to be always on guard and alert to the subtle workings of the flesh which constantly places obstacles in our path that we might be enticed to forget the Spirit's lead and fail to submit to its way. It is a very real danger each of us must look out for, not only in ourselves but also in each other. A danger we must pray God would reveal and chasten, out of love according to His will so that a wrong might be recognized and help granted to turn from it.

Truly, brethren and sisters, to live in the knowledge of the power of the Spirit is a great blessing. We must recognize this and attempt with all our heart and determination to walk in its way, submitting to its lead through the love of God, as Jesus' life and ministry so clearly teaches. In this love then, let us make our prayer the more earnest, beseeching God that help be granted in our efforts to enter in at that strait gate, believing in faith that if it be God's will, the Spirit will shine forth and lead us through the darkness of this life unto the entering in of that life which shall have no end.

M.C.S.

A Journey to New York (*Part 1*)

The Longest Day.

THE DAY OF DEPARTURE HAD ARRIVED, and we were off on an early start with plenty of time in hand as we thought, until we arrived at Manchester Airport. There a vestige of the chaos remaining from the Industrial trouble of the previous week was still apparent. The travel Agent had previously warned us to ensure we obtained seats on the B flight. At the ticket desk a different view prevailed. Designations for the scheduled A and B flights no longer applied, our baggage quickly disappeared and we were told that we had no choice but to follow our baggage on to the A flight.

What of those Brethren and Sisters travelling to the Airport to say farewell? What could we do! A quick telephone call was made, and a lingering and looking round from time to time; and then a taking turn to leave the queue which was progressing towards the barrier and the International Departure Lounge, the point of no return, in case some of the Brethren and Sisters had arrived and understandably would not be aware of the change of arrangement. Suddenly a Sister appeared, hurrying to see if she could find us, and at our call she turned towards us. How thankful and glad we were to be able to say good-bye to her, and through her, to others we knew were making considerable effort to say a last farewell.

Then, through the barrier and the search of one's person, and hand baggage check. A brief wait followed by a call to proceed along to the departure pier. We looked out through the window, and there, awaiting the passengers scheduled for Toronto, were two green aircraft. An unknown airline had made provision for the expectant travellers; and had filled the gap caused by the temporary grounding of the large DC 10 aircraft. These craft had flown all the way from the far shores of Western America.

But now there was a further wait; an announcement was made of an hour's delay, and a request for the crowd to return to the International Lounge. But the Airport Departure flight time indicator still shone out its original scheduled time message to the now uncertain waiting travellers. Enquiries were made to ensure there was no mistake, for anxiety was now felt in case we should be left behind, and expectant ones awaiting the flight arrival on the other side of the ocean would be waiting in vain. The enquiry brought results; the flight time indicator changed its signal, and we rested content, looking now and then through a small opening in the barrier wall perchance we might yet glimpse those who had come to see us off.

At last the call came, and we passed out across the tarmac, pausing to gaze up at the throng of sightseers gathered on the viewing balcony. The eye roamed that line of faces, and yes, there they were; long and patiently having waited to get a glimpse of us, and to see us depart. We waved, ascended to the aircraft door, and then our loved ones were lost to view.

The take off was at 1.50 p.m., and the expected flight time was 7 hours and 20 minutes. In what seemed quite a short while we were 33,000 feet in the sky; the fields small and remote beneath, and very soon no fields at all for in a matter of a few minutes we had crossed the coast and were over the Irish Sea. Ireland was crossed just south of Ulster, and soon also the western Irish shores were left behind. Flying time was so far about 45 minutes, and now the great Atlantic Ocean stretched before us. But a new interest; the aroma of dinner preparing! Meanwhile the sun shone gloriously around us, as the clouds lay thick beneath our feet. How wonderful the sunshine, how heartening and uplifting! On and on we sped. Did we see ice floes or were they clouds? No they were ice floes; and then at 6.45 p.m. BST we were over Labrador and Newfoundland, approaching the Gulf of St. Lawrence. As we progressed towards the St. Lawrence River the sky reflected ultra-marine lightening beneath into a golden strip of cloud and far beneath the hazy blue of land, Canada! A vast land of lakes and rivers, massive tracts that appeared uninhabited, but here and there a mottling of the hazy blue, by areas of green aspect where there was no forest. Quebec and Montreal were passed. Ships with frothy wakes trailing were observed. Then the initial descent to Toronto as the aircraft throbbed with deceleration. Here everywhere was greener and obviously more populated, and then suddenly we had touched down. The time — 9.10 p.m. BST but the sun still riding high in the sky, bathing everywhere in its glow, and invigorating the travellers. Why, it was only late afternoon in Toronto, around 4.00 p.m. American time! What a bubbling churning concourse at the airport. Would our friends find us in all this throng? We would wait at a place marked meeting place. Then suddenly their beaming, friendly faces appeared, what a joyous welcome, and how naturally drawn to each other.

But now another journey in front of us, but greatly lightened by the wonderful sunshine. From Toronto we sped by car en route for our place of stay, stopping briefly for a meal. About a hundred miles still to go, but everywhere illuminated by the golden glow. Along the northern shore of Lake Ontario we sped westward, and then an about turn as we swept around the western corner of the lake to turn back eastward for Fort Erie and the Peace Bridge which crosses the Niagara River, and links Canada to the United States. With a minimum of delay we were through the United States Customs,

with passport duly stamped, and no baggage search. Now we were heading south and south west following the shore of Lake Erie. It did not seem long before Buffalo's tall buildings came into view, and then shortly afterwards we were at Orchard Park. Here alighted one who had been amongst those who had awaited our arrival at Toronto. With a wave we were off again with one more call at the Hanover side of Forestville, a Sister patiently waiting there to give us a joyous greeting.

Now the last lap, and darkness was overtaking us. This was route 39 into Forestville centre. What a delightful little town, with wooden houses and stores, well kept. The roads tree lined, and the gardens of the villas blessed with many trees. Forestville was apparently formerly called Walnut Falls, where is a watercourse called Walnut Creek. Reputedly taking its name from a giant black walnut tree, said to have been the largest tree grown in New York State, which unfortunately blew down in 1822. The tree was about thirty feet in circumference and the lower end was cut off and hollowed out to be taken on exhibition. But the change of the township's name to Forestville was indeed appropriate.

Through Forestville we went, where the road began to ascend, and the air began to freshen with the rising ground. At last journey's end and to a loving welcome with arms extended, as we walked towards the house its lights winking at us in the dusk of the sun's going down.

Truly the longest day, but a wonderful and invigorating experience, and a fellowship that needed no words to express.

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

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth: and he had horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.”

(Rev. 13:11)

EARLIER THIS YEAR the Pope visited Monte Cassino, the Benedictine Abbey, eighty miles south of Rome. This Abbey was the scene of a very ferocious battle in World War Two and many soldiers are buried in the area. Ten thousand people were there to greet him, as he said:-

“I come to listen and to transmit to all, the message of those who lie in these cemeteries — British, German, Italian and French — and I say that the sacrifice of their lives was not in vain. I pray for the soldiers in these cemeteries and the soldiers killed in all wars.”

This world religious leader has an undoubted popularity, even in Communist dominated countries. So much so that a Communist party leader in the Ukraine has urged a stepping up of atheist propaganda in Russia. The Communist spokesman said there was "shortcomings" among those responsible for conducting anti-religious propaganda, they did not comprehend the changes taking place in religious organisations and in "the tactics of the clergy".

Shortly after this article appears it is expected that the Pope will be in Ireland, to appear at an open-air Mass in Knock, Co. Mayo, during ceremonies to mark the centenary of the reputed apparition of the Virgin Mary. It doubtless will be regarded as a very great event for Ireland; and the success of the visit will resound throughout the world.

In Italy, the Communists have the largest political party in any of the Western nations. It is striking to note that the leader of this group has only praise for the new Pope. The Italian politician has in a sense outstretched his hand to the religious leader in a speech made in Rome, as follows:-

"For three years every kind of force has tried to deform and distort our line of national unity, insisting obsessively on some kind of preferential accord between Communists and Christian Democrats. . . .

"Only the Catholic Church, at least at its most responsible level, has kept itself far afield from this uninformed, coercive and aggressive anti-communism."

The Papacy obviously is strengthening its known establishments, and is successfully making progress in those areas which hitherto were anti-Papal.

But this religious leader who has proclaimed that all who died at Monte Cassino did not die in vain, implying good came from that dreadful conflict, is deceiving mankind. The appearance is of a lamb, but the voice is the dragonic voice of war. The view that soldiers do not sacrifice their lives in vain, is a palliative often used by kings and politicians who decimate their populations, and waste the lives of their nations' young ones, on the altar of war.

What did Monte Cassino achieve for the world? A valiant and heroic stand by the German forces, yes, and an extremely courageous attack by the soldiers who were allied with the British forces; and therefore goes down as such in the glowing accounts of the history books which are absorbed in propogating the theme of the heroism of war.

But the world is not a better place. The world is a far more dangerous place to live in now than it ever was before, though admittedly it was certainly a dangerous place then.

Russia is now deploying a series of new offensive missiles in East Germany. Some of which are believed to be fitted with poison gas warheads; at least one in ten of them. This means that Russia has a considerable stock of poison gas, sufficient to kill the entire population of Western Europe twice over.

Britain and America no longer holds stocks of lethal gases, apparently to avoid the cost of setting up an effective civil defence programme. The old respirators of the last war would be quite useless against the nerve gas that has now been developed, and which it is quite impossible for the human senses to detect until a lethal dose has been inhaled or absorbed through the skin. Servicemen in Britain are not required to practice against chemical warfare attacks for fear of alarming the civilian population for whom there is no defence.

But when British Servicemen go to sea, or are based in West Germany, Belgium or Holland they are required to carry out chemical warfare exercises, and they have to wear gas-proof clothing, sometimes for long periods.

America however has a drug, which can be transmitted in the form of a gas. It is a hundred times more powerful than L.S.D.; and in tests some time ago those who were overcome by it, when initial experiments were taking place, took days before they were able to awake from its effects.

Moreover, America has designed a new MX ballistic missile with multiple warheads. The intention is to place these weapons in massive trenches in the South-Western part of the United States, and move them around at frequent intervals to confuse Russian intelligence as to their exact location at any given time.

Recently France has sought to bring Britain into collaboration with France for the production of nuclear warheads. But Britain has refused, preferring to continue to work with the United States in the field of nuclear experimentation and development. So France goes on alone, developing land-based ballistic missiles capable of reaching targets in Russia, which has caused France to claim that it is the World's "third nuclear power".

Japan, another strong nation, is now beginning to prepare for re-armament. The Japanese government has made a study of how it can rapidly build up its ground, sea and air forces. The Japanese view is that the Russians are now equal to the United States in nuclear capability and military standing in Europe as well as Asia, and they intend to do something about it in their own self interest, even though hitherto since the last war, the Japanese have had an abhorrence towards any scheme approaching a re-armament programme.

Meanwhile, Russia continues to grow in strength. Intelligence reports indicate that a new peak of power will be reached by Russia early in the 1980's. The total "throw weight" of its intercontinental ballistic missiles will then amount to twelve million pounds, which will be four times more than the United States capability. It is assessed that American defence will be vulnerable to a Soviet first strike, for the Russians have almost completed the development of a new nuclear submarine which is designed to carry long range ballistic missiles with multi-nuclear pre-targeted warheads, and so America can never be sure from what direction they will be launched.

Moreover, Russia had developed a new long-range bomber, in addition to which there are already nine hundred very advanced submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and a thousand intercontinental ballistic missiles.

If America was to send bombers to the Soviet Union, such aircraft would be opposed by more than seven thousand radars capable of warning of their approach. Two thousand five hundred interceptors would be awaiting them and ten thousand surface-to-air missiles. Russia is still spending more than twice the amount on its weaponry than the United States.

No wonder the former United States Secretary of State has warned that the present American administration should be doing more to build up that country's defences. His words were:-

"The military balance is beginning to tilt ominously against the United States in too many significant categories of weaponry . . . if the present trends continue we face the chilling prospect of a world sliding gradually out of control, with our relative military power declining, with our economic life line vulnerable to black mail, with hostile forces growing more rapidly than our ability to deal with them, and with fewer and fewer nations friendly to us surviving. . . .

We now face the challenge of the early 80's with the forces designed in the 60's."

Russia, obviously, is moving into a position where it will be able to freely use its superiority in massive conventionally armed forces without fear of a nuclear counter attack from the United States.

The world is certainly under a great threat and must look to the papacy for a way out. But what is there to look to, when the world's religious leader states that the lives which were lost on both sides in the last war were not lost in vain? He therefore does not condemn war. So is fulfilled the prophecy:-

" . . . he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon."
(Rev. 13:11)

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, Orchard Park.
Alternate Week: Revelation Study.

The visit of Bro. and Sis. Dennis and Barbara Lancaster brought much joy, help and strength in the counsel together and in the companionship of those of like precious faith. We feel drawn more closely to all through their visit. We are grateful for their safe return to Manchester and grateful too for the blessing allowed.

Our Sunday School Outing is planned, God Willing, for August 18th.

As we feel God's hand working in our midst, we are thankful for the guidance and help granted in difficult times. The supplications and thoughts of all the brethren and sisters are most needed and appreciated.

J.A.DeF.

“PENTRIP”, Black Rock, Portmadoc

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

We were pleased to have the company and help of Bro. and Sis. W. G. Butterfield on Sunday 15th July and also Sis. Heason.

We now look forward to seeing several visitors in early September. How good to hear also of the safe journey of Bro. and Sis. D. Lancaster to New York, and the mutual benefit involved.

per D.L.

MANCHESTER: Rycroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, Manchester.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread: 11.30 a.m.
Bible Class: 7.30 p.m. in the ante room to large hall,
Wednesday evening.

We have been pleased to have back with us Bro. and Sis. Dennis Lancaster following their recent visit to the States, affording the help of binding us more closely to the Remnant in America. Their trials are ours; and believe our trials are theirs. In this way comfort is afforded which is denied the world at large.

W.V.B.