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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

“Be strong and of a good courage.”

WE HAVE BEEN LISTENING to the last words of Joshua as he finished his work of bringing Israel into their promised inheritance and dividing up that land so that everyone had a part. Joshua means saved of Yahweh, and we know the Greek version is Jesus, Saviour. Joshua's role was vital to the purpose of God with His people. God chose him particularly for this work, and there must have been something very special about Joshua which caused God to select him to take the place of Moses. If we can discern this spirit of Joshua, it can help us as we seek to be His chosen ones, remembering that “many are called, but few are chosen.” We believe Joshua will be at Jesus' right hand at the judgment. Let us strive to discern why.

The record tells us that Joshua was one hundred and ten years old when he died — an old age. (Joshua 24:29). By putting together some dates from the chronology, we can discern Joshua's faithful work over many years. From Numbers 13, we can see the tentative date, when the spies entered the land, was around 1,490 B.C. Joshua died some 63 years after this faithful witness against Israel as they feared to go up into the land because of its fenced cities and the formidable giants. Joshua was not a young man at that time for 110 minus 63 years is 47 years of age. From this age at Kadesh Barnea, we can add forty years for Israel's time of wandering in the wilderness, and we see that he must have been about 87 years old when given the responsibility of leading them into the land. He laboured for 23 years in the work of casting out the inhabitants and dividing the land for Israel's inheritance. It is sometimes helpful to get the background.

Joshua, then, was an old man by today's standards, and perhaps even by the standards of his day. Yet, God required this work of him, and he worked in faithfulness to accomplish God's purpose. How greatly he desired to pass on to his brethren and sisters the wisdom and help he had received to do what God had placed upon him. He said:

“... I am old and stricken in age:

“And ye have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the LORD your God is he that hath fought for you.” (Joshua 23:2-3)

God had done it for Israel. There was no pride here on Joshua's part, no self-esteem, no taking the credit to himself, but a giving of the glory to the Almighty. Further, as the result of his own experiences, Joshua added:

“Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left;

“Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.” (verses 6 and 11)

Joshua fully realized that their hearts would often fail, and their fears could overcome them, for he exhorted them, and us: “. . . be ye . . . very courageous. . . .” We may not always realize that courage is a necessity in order to keep the work of the Lord, but don’t we, by experience, soon learn differently, brethren and sisters? “Courageous”, used here by Joshua, comes from a root word meaning, “to fasten upon”, and is translated as “constant”, as well as “be of good courage”, “courageous”, and “behave self valiantly.” In Joshua 1:7, we find another word used for “courageous”, the root of which is “*to be alert*”. Here, God is revealing for us that there are two factors involved in being courageous: 1. To be fastened upon, be constant, established; and 2. To be alert, watchful, circumspect. If we do not quickly see a *need*, or a requirement to do certain things in keeping God’s word, we can fail; and by not being aware can lose the hope as we have seen some do. It takes a great deal of courage to face up to and *do* what God requires. We need alertness to see the problem and the need and then a steadfastness to do it, whatever the cost. Joshua has told us:

“Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, *that ye love the LORD your God.*” (Joshua 23:11)

Why must we take such heed to love Him, brethren and sisters? *He* it is that provides; *He* it is that drives out the adversary; *He* it is that warns of danger; *He* it is that raises up the Joshuas, one to Israel of old and some 1,400 years later, the latter day Joshua (Jesus), fulfilling all righteousness. We know something of the courage of Joshua as he took up the grave responsibility of leading Israel even though 87 years old. We know too of the perfect courage of Jesus to take up a greater work, the conquering of His flesh nature in obedience to God’s word. Joshua had a great love for God and so did Jesus, thereby with courage doing what He required of them. Do we take a like “heed” unto ourselves, brethren and sisters, that we “love the Lord (our) God”?

“Now therefore fear the Lord”

Joshua’s exhortation to his brethren, including ourselves, continued:

“Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth. . . .” (Joshua 24:14)

We may think of courage as a lack of fear, but this is not so. Courage means righteous action in spite of great fear. However, the courage of

the Spirit also involves another fear: the fear of the Lord which enables us to serve Him in sincerity and truth, even though our flesh may tremble. Is it a lack of godly fear which can lead to insincerity and, therefore, eventually to failure because of a desire to serve self? If we truly fear God, realizing that He knows our every thought and deed, dare we move in insincerity? Could we try to hide our wrong doing from Him? Could we try to conceal our lack of courage to face what He requires of us, to test our love for Him? How much easier we find it is to serve the flesh whatever way that may be: a close relationship with someone but which is not possible because of God's word, a house that has everything but still needs more, a job or a work, or any aim that takes too much of our time or our strength or our love. Many things are pleasing to the flesh but are contrary to the will of God, to His law. It takes alertness and steadfastness on each one's part to show forth the courage He desires.

“The Lord, He it is that doth go before thee”

Joshua, in his old age, was required to lead Israel into the land of promise. He could have said: “I have been faithful; I have witnessed against Israel's rebellion at Kadesh-Barnea; I was in danger of being stoned because of that witness; I have been promised a place in the land; why should I take on such a grave responsibility at my age? Haven't I earned a time of rest?” But, no! in faithfulness, he obeyed God's command as the hand of the Spirit was upon him. Moses had said to Joshua:

“... Be strong and of a good courage: for thou must go with this people unto the land...” (Deut. 31:7)

Moses knew by hard experience what strength and courage would be needed to carry out this charge, and so he continued, reminding Joshua:

“... the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.” (Deut. 31:8)

How true, indeed, for great help was given of God, as we read:

“... Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him...” (Deut. 34:9)

What greater help could he know than this spirit of wisdom, the aggregate of God's wonderful counsel. He was able to draw upon this help when his courage or determination seemed weak, and in that way he could be fastened or established and alert, able to do the work required.

Yet, no doubt, when the day came that Moses died and the responsibility fell upon him, what a great load it must have seemed. His courage needed bolstering, and God, in His wisdom and mercy, spoke:

“Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them. . . .” (Joshua 1:2)

It was a time of testing, a time of visitation. God, however, knew Joshua’s fears, his needs, and said:

“. . . as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

“*Be strong and of a good courage. . . .*” (verses 5 and 6)

Both Hebrew words used for “courage” were spoken to Joshua: “be strong”, “to fasten up”, and “of good courage”, “be alert”. If fastened upon God, what strength. If alert, what care! It is not a coincidence that both these Hebrew words were spoken to Joshua in his time of need. God had said, “I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee”, and added, “*fasten upon this*”, “*be alert*” to all circumstances and you *can* do it. What a message of encouragement and inspiration to our brother in his need and to us as well, brethren and sisters. God further speaks:

“Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the *LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.*” (verse 9)

Joshua must have stored up these words in his heart and pondered them often, for at the end of his days, he repeated them to his brethren for their help. They must have been his strength, his guide; and these same words can be ours as we strive to respond unto God’s words, “Have not I commanded thee.”

“Thou shalt meditate therein”

There was yet another source of strength provided for Joshua:

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein. . . .” (Joshua 1:8)

“Meditate” comes from a word meaning “to murmur” — not in the sense that Israel murmured against God and Moses in the wilderness, but as of speaking to one’s self, to ponder, to study. “. . . thou shalt ponder therein day and night. . . .” “. . . thou shalt speak of it to

thyself day and night . . .” We do not always have our Bibles with us, but if His word is in our hearts, won’t we think upon it, ponder it when faced with decisions in our everyday living? In this way, help is always present to discern what God would have us do, and the assurance is also there that He is with us as He promised. Can we not look to Him, to His law in everything we do? Won’t we, then, be steadfast, alert, and thereby more courageous to do His will? Was this what Joshua knew? Was this the spirit of wisdom? Was this what moved Joshua to fear God and to serve Him in sincerity and truth? Had God discerned this spirit in Joshua and so had chosen him for the great work? Can it do the same for us, brethren and sisters, helping us in our struggle to be strong and of good courage in any situation which God may choose to put us in?

Can we, then, join with Joshua and other faithful ones who have learned to meditate in His law day and night, and so grow to love the Lord?

David, one who did truly love God, tells us:

“O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

“Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD.” (Psalm 31:23-24)

J.A.DeF.



Christadelphians then and now

JUST OVER A HUNDRED YEARS AGO the following appeared in the *Christadelphian*:

“*Christadelphian* — The name “Christadelphian” is, in our day, the verbal symbol of the narrow way. By its association, it embodies, in a single word, that there is no hope outside the belief and obedience of the truth, and that truth is not to be found in the pale of Christendom. This is the secret of the odiousness of the name to its enemies and its usefulness to its friends. “Swedenborgian”, “Mormon”, “Unitarian” and all other sectarian titles, allow of salvation to those who may not embrace the systems expressed. Hence their respectability and fragrance compared with “Christadelphian”. The term Christian in this respect is a compound of them all. It defines nothing that is offensive to the most faithless sinner. Hence it is in high odour. It is not strange that the Renunciationists (those who left the Truth in 1873) denying the true nature of Christ, are discarding “Christadelphian” and taking to “Christian”. The plea that the former title is an obstacle to the truth is contrary to fact; for the progress of the truth, in our day, dates from the adoption of a distinctive title.”

The question might be asked for the thoughtful to consider whether Christadelphians today are as firm in the stand as was the case a century ago? The answer is undoubtedly — “No!” The majority of Christadelphians, especially those who at one time belonged to Suffolk St. and also the Advocate in North America favour the wider view that salvation may be obtained by those who are not Christadelphians. This is evident in some of their periodicals. Even the leading Magazine, the *Christadelphian* opened its pages, to views that a few generations ago, would have been condemned as outrageous.

A series of articles appeared under the title “The Origin of man” in which doubt was cast on the divine record in Genesis; denying, if you please, that Adam was the first man. No attempt was made to solve the mystery which this causes: what became of those who were not born of Adam, were not of Adam’s race, and consequently were outside the explicit divine decree: “As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive?” Departure from *the* Truth always produces confusion; but may appear to be resolved by the machinations of philosophy. The warnings of the Apostle Paul have their undoubted application today:

“For I know this, that after my departing shall *grievous wolves* enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.”

(Acts 20:29-31)

How true are the words of Robert Roberts that the name *Christadelphian* was the “verbal symbol of the narrow way . . . it embodies in a single word that there is no hope outside the belief and obedience of the truth” and adds “this is the secret of its odiousness to its enemies and usefulness to its friends.” This implies a distinct and clear separation by those in *the Truth* from all the denominations of what is styled “Christendom”. This separation causes the “odiousness” to those who are outside *the Truth* and whose fellowship embodies many groups who are not of *the Truth*. This is perhaps more keenly felt when due to error there is division. Are those who have embraced error either by supporting it or fellowshipping it in *the light*, in the Truth? If not can they be regarded as “brethren”, as Christ’s brethren? To withhold this salutation may be offensive, or in the words of Robert Roberts be the “secret of odiousness” to those who although in error, and consequently are not of the Truth claim to be Christ’s brethren. Yet it is obvious that when error is embraced and will not be forsaken then such “walk in darkness” and to address such as “brethren” is a denial of the Truth and is certainly no help to restore the unfaithful. A few words of Robert Roberts on this are apposite:

He was asked: “Why do you speak of Edward Turney, David Handley? Why don’t you call them ‘brother’, or at least give them the title ‘Mr.’? We have no wish to be harsh or discourteous. The men referred to have had a certain standing in the truth by their former profession. ‘Mr.’ would conceal this. Yet their present position being one of ‘renunciation’ of what they believed, they cannot be called brother without implying that the doctrine of the sacrifice of Christ is of no importance.”

The restricted use of the salutation “brother”

The salutation “brother” has a divine significance. Jesus said: “My brethren are those which hear the word of God and do it.”
(Luke 8:21)

Can we, or ought we to be apparently more charitable than Jesus? Certainly by departing from the principle which He has laid down we shall not give offence even to “the faithless sinner”, but only at

the expense of *the* truth. Charity or kindness is good; it is a quality of the spirit, but first there must be true faith, which is only possible when the principles of the truth are courageously upheld. This inevitably will cause "feeling", perhaps offence to those who realise they are condemned by our view. In this there may be *hope*" To give the impression to one who is without Christ, and without hope, that he still has hope is really an injustice and injury to *him*. If he does consider his position, and repents, then indeed there is hope; and it is this that must be discreetly sought for his eternal benefit. To allow him to think that life is within his grasp when it is not, is a failure of divine duty, as it is a grievous wrong, to the one addressed.

In dealing with these situations there must not be given any idea of superiority; rather must the conversation convey humility by showing a personal deference to the Word, which will be most helpful to the listener; a deference even to the questioner, remembering that we at one time were without Christ. It is a painful trait of the flesh not to defer, but to assert superiority. This must be most displeasing to the Spirit, as it is odious to the listener. The profession of the Truth is not a battle but a meek declaration of the will of God. Indeed we are forbidden to engage in strife. Oh! that we could always remember this! Never could it be imagined that Moses was a debater, lacking in deference. It is recorded that he was the meekest man upon earth. What a tribute to a godly character! Hence his declaration of the Truth was without clamour, but like the *dew* whose beneficence is evident in the morning sun as in the light it sparkles with divine radiance. The dew forms without any sound at all; but there is no denying its presence and goodness. What a delightful character must Moses have been, of whom it is recorded when he addressed the brethren and sisters:

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak, and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.
My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew." (Deut. 32:1-2)

Even the Most High, whose voice could break the cedars, was so gentle in His appeal to Israel that the record states:

"I will be as the *dew* unto Israel." (Hosea 14:5)

The result of this condescension is indeed marvellous, and shows the value of the gentle approach:

"He (Israel) shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon." (Hosea 14:5-6)

There is a difference between the true gentle approach and the affected one. The true gentle approach can only come from the heart which feels for the listener. This the listener appreciates and so is made ready to receive what is said. If the Most High is like this to His people, can we dare to be any different in our hearts? It is not what is said always, but *how* it is said, which reveals a heart that is soft and *feels* for the listener. We know Jesus was like this, as was His Father, so we cannot do better than try to reach up to His example.

Christadelphians have gone in for higher education, have received "degrees", and this makes for a leadership which is thereby regarded as being better informed, more learned than the flock, and consequently tends to give authority to men which should only be given to God.

W.V.B.

The Law of Love

ONE CANNOT HELP BUT BE IMPRESSED by the concern the Apostle Paul had for his brethren and their well-being in the sight of God. This concern we know, for it is revealed in the many letters Paul wrote unto those of old, who were joined together in the One Body. Surely, Paul's concern must have served as a great source of help and likewise today, the record of Paul's inspired words can maintain and sustain us in our struggle to hold fast our position as those having been called out by God.

We find such help in Ephesians 4 verses 1-3 as Paul's concern for his brethren prompted him to write in bonds from Rome:

“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation to which ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Was not Paul's concern to keep the unity of the spirit, and must this not be our effort in the relationship we have one with another? When we read these words of Paul — “that ye walk worthy of the vocation (calling) to which ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another *in love*”, one's mind thinks of the Lord Jesus, the one whose walk in the purpose of God was perfect, who in all His living displayed an absolute lowliness and meekness with long-suffering and forbearing in love. It was by such determined living that Jesus fulfilled all righteousness, that He above all things, put on love, which we are told is “the bond of perfectness”. Is this not what our efforts must be like as we endeavour to grow in the unity of the spirit we share? Yes, it must, but how might this be done in a practical sense?

Paul perhaps again helps us here in our reading of his letter to the Galatians in chapter 6 verse 2 where we are told:

“Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.” We find in going to the concordance, that both words “bear” and “burden” as used here come from the same root word meaning “to walk”, so we might read this verse as “walk ye one another's walk”. Are we not then being told to place ourselves in one another's place, to be circumspect, endeavouring to see what our brother's walk is like, so as to better be able to know his burden? The importance of our being able to place ourselves in each others circumstances

cannot be overlooked, rather it is a necessary requirement, for we are told if we can do this, it is possible to fulfil the law of Christ. Paul confirms this in the familiar words of Galatians 5 verses 13 and 14 saying,

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

For all the law is fulfilled in one words, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”.

To love another as thyself requires a giving of ourselves, a serving one another as we would like to be served, really a sharing and communicating about the burdens each face. So must not this love be the essential ingredient in our determination to bear one another's burdens, for by that love we can help each other in our walk, and thus endeavour to keep that unity of the spirit so necessary to our well-being.

— A Pure Heart —

To help us further, Paul tells us in another of his letters, one to Timothy in chapter 1 verse 6 of I Timothy that,

“Now the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.”

These are ways through which our love can be expressed, ways we can reveal our love in the bearing of each other's burdens. One way we are told we can reveal our love is out of a pure heart. Pure is to be clean or clear, really that in which there can be nothing hid. Our flesh, however, given the opportunity, tends to blemish that which comes from the heart, to make it unclean. But, if the heart is really striving to be pure, it can conquer the uncleanness of the flesh and show forth purity. It requires a circumcising of the heart, a cutting off of the fleshly lusts, to turn from a confidence in the flesh to a trust in the Spirit.

A circumcised heart is one out of which the spirit of love can flow, and in such a heart will not that love help to lift up each of us — to support the burdens of one another? Out of such a mutual pureness of heart we are assured that only blessing can come, for the Lord Jesus has told us “Blessed are the pure in heart: For they shall see God”. Only those who have struggled to cut off the flesh of the heart in order to purify it will be allowed to come before God as David tells us in Psalm 24 verses 3-5:

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in his holy place?

He who hath clean hands, and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation."

In order to be granted such a blessing, our display of love in our bearing of one another's burden is that spirit of love which God will be pleased to see in us, the spirit which will reveal to God our attempts to foster unity in the One Body.

— **A Good Conscience** —

Another way Paul has told us to reveal our love, is out of a good conscience. This word conscience we find means to "co-perceive". It is the ability to know, to discern that which is good from that which is evil in the sight of God. A good conscience can make us know what God desires of us and serves as a guide in directing our love towards others, if we are sensitive and submissive to its lead. It is often difficult to follow our conscience because it tears at the flesh, it makes the flesh do what it naturally would not do. It therefore puts down the flesh and helps to reveal the spirit.

Can we see how necessary the revealing of our love out of a good conscience is, for if we are able to do so, will there not be a meaningful show of love, a love reflecting the greater love God has allowed us to know through our being joined to Him? Will not such a love as this, out of a good conscience, help in the way that is most needful — in helping each other?

— **Faith Unfeigned** —

The final way Paul has told us love can be revealed is by faith unfeigned. To feign is to falsify. Unfeigned then is to be genuine, without hypocrisy, without dissimulation. Faith unfeigned is a living faith, not a dead or empty show. It is a faith which requires works towards one another which reveal an unfeigned love. It is not a case of saying, "I have to love", but an inward desire to truly reach out and then do so in love, in a genuine faith. What a help we can be in the bearing of one another's burdens, if our revealing of love can be as intense as this.

Again Paul helps us in Romans chapter 12 verse 9 and 10 saying,

"Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another;"

In what other way can we better reveal our brotherly love than in our bearing of one another's burdens as we struggle in the one faith?

So, let us stop and examine ourselves carefully in regards to our responsibility to one another, making sure we are endeavouring to bear our own, as well as helping our brother to bear his burden.

We can be helped in this work if we can keep in mind the message of our brother Paul from God, that the end of God's commandment is LOVE. Was this not Paul's spirit — a spirit of concern for the circumstances his brethren were in, even while he himself was in dire straits?

Let us attempt to keep in mind our need to maintain the unity of the spirit and so strive to grow in the revealing of our love which can and will bind us ever closer in our burdens. It is our attempts to fulfil the law of Christ, which can enable us to walk as He has walked, in perfect love, worthy of the vocation where with we are called.

M.C.S.

A Journey to New York (*Part 3*)

Niagara.

ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREAT NATURAL MARVELS divides New York from the Province of Ontario, Canada, where the waters of Lake Erie descend via the Niagara River into Lake Ontario. On the East side of this 34 mile long river is the United States, and on the West side is Canada, for the river flows in a northerly direction.

Visitors enjoying the renowned hospitality of New Yorkers in the Buffalo region of the State invariably are taken to see the Niagara phenomenon, the focal point of which is the Falls. What a sight it is! How grateful we felt for the effort made to take us.

Leaving Forestville we travelled along the Thruway skirting the city of Buffalo, crossing into Canada by the Peace Bridge over the river at Fort Erie. We then took the road along the west bank of the river. The swiftness of the flow was discernable, and what a striking thought that here was the outlet of the four upper Great Lakes. Namely Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Lake Huron and Lake Erie; having an aggregate basin area of nearly two hundred and fifty thousand square miles.

It was a beautiful day, the air had freshened after rain. Soon we came across a Cafeteria where we had tasty French Fries and Hamburgers, to sustain us on the journey. This meal was partaken out of doors on a picnic bench provided by the Cafeteria. It was here that we saw an American Robin, another example, in its small way, of the difference between England and America. The American robin is three times the size of the English one, more like the Thrush,

but it was unmistakably a Robin with its red breast. Proceeding further we were impressed by the well-kept grass bank, a kind of park way, and on the opposite side of the road away from the river, the neat gardens of the houses and the well swept pavement. Not one piece of litter to be seen anywhere.

The Niagara River divides and sweeps round Grand Island which belongs to United States territory, then rejoining into one main stream again, rapidly heads for the Falls. As we proceeded we came to the pretty Chippawa Creek (the Welland River) at its junction with the Niagara River. Called Chippawa after a tribe of Indians belonging to a group of the original peoples of the Western Continent, called "The people without moccasins". Such a term requires some pondering for only very hardy people could walk upon such terrain, especially in the winter, "without moccasins"!

Chippawa Creek was the terminus of the first Welland Canal, constructed to form a waterway between the two great lakes, Erie and Ontario. But now there is a greater waterway for ships, parallel with the Niagara river, having eight locks because Lake Ontario lies over three hundred and twenty feet lower than Lake Erie.

Suddenly in front of us we could see a mushroom shaped cloud rising above the river into the sky. Yes, this was the first evidence to us that we were nearing this world renowned waterfall. The total width of the Niagara River at this point is over a thousand yards, more than half a mile wide, and the amount of water pouring over every second measures two hundred thousand cubic feet.

There are really three falls. The American Falls, the Bridal Veil or Lunar Falls on the American side of the river, and the Horseshoe Falls on the Canadian side. The Horseshoe is the more spectacular, its height 160 feet and the length of its curving crest line more than 2000 feet. The American Falls on the other hand though slightly higher is only 1000 feet broad. The water is largely free from sediment, and therefore because of its clarity contributes to the beauty of this cataract. On the brink dividing the American Falls from the Canadian falls is the renowned Goat Island, which has stood against the rushing flood century after century, thereby dividing the river, and therefore the cataract as a result, at this point.

Beneath the falls and barely discernible through the great spray mist of the crashing flood is a cauldron of turbulent water. These rapids rush along under the old Rainbow Bridge between perpendicular walls 250 feet high into the whirlpool. Shortly afterwards the river bends abruptly and approaches two great power stations, one on the American side and the other on the Canadian side where a considerable amount of hydro-electric power is generated.

As we looked down into the chasm we found it an impressive sight. To a degree the river has been tamed and harnessed to provide

electricity, but there is no way that great volume of water can be held back.

The early explorers and settlers from Europe, such as La Salle who in 1678, established a trading post at Fort Niagara, must have felt overcome with awe when they beheld this great flow, unrelieved by any of men's works, in what was at the time a wild Red-Indian habited region. Now in these times millions of sightseers visit this spot every year.

After seeing the falls and the gorge, there was the Floral Clock to attract our attention, modelled after the one that can be seen in Edinburgh, Scotland. The hour and minute hands weigh 500 pounds each and the quickly moving second hand 250 pounds. Underneath these huge fingers is the face design composed of twenty-four thousand carpet plants, and at its base is a water garden with lilies, and day and night blooming lotus, illuminated by submerged lighting.

Eventually it was time to have another meal and we proceeded in a northerly direction towards Fort Niagara and arrived at Queenston Heights where was a Restaurant with a table which commanded a beautiful view along the river as it flowed onwards towards Lake Ontario. Before entering the building where an excellent meal was awaiting us we looked around Queenston Heights National Historic Park. The trees were magnificent, the grass well tended, and on an elevated place stood a monument in memory of General Brock, the British Army leader, who lost his life on October 13th, 1812 when leading his men who were attempting to regain the heights which had just been lost to American soldiers. Later the same day troops under the command of another British General named Sheaffe, who had Red Indians to help him, took the hill, capturing many prisoners. What a sad conflict was the War of 1812, declared by Congress on June 18th, 1812. The Americans from the outset undertook to invade Canada across their northern frontier, but were thwarted by British regulars, Canadian militia and Indian allies. These troops helped by an initial naval control by the British, of Lakes Erie and Ontario, were sufficient to defeat the Americans. At the time General Brock was most energetic and skilful in his conduct of resistance, repulsing American attempts to establish themselves on the Canadian side of the Niagara river. Hence the monument; but no doubt his efforts and the supreme sacrifice of his life is largely forgotten, even though a monument to him remains.

After a memorable meal, partaken in a lovely setting with such a magnificent panoramic view, we returned on our way across the Peace Bridge, the name of which takes on a more significant meaning as earlier history of American-Canadian relationship is considered; we arrived back at Forestville as nightfall drew its black curtain over the landscape.

(to be continued)

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

“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world”

(Rev. 12:9)

FOR SEEING ALL FORMED RELIGION, is founded at first, upon the faith which a multitude hath in some one person, whom they believe not only to be a wise man, and to labour to procure their happiness, but also to be a holy man, to whom God himself vouchsafeth to declare his will supernaturally; it followeth necessarily, when they that have the government of religion, shall come to have either the wisdom of those men, their sincerity, or their love suspected; or when they shall be unable to show any probable token of divine revelation; that the religion which they desire to uphold, must be suspected likewise; and, without the fear of the civil sword, contradicted and rejected.”

Thomas Hobbes.

“Leviathan” 1651.

The above philosophical reasoning, from the Stuart period, which can be culled from Hobbes’ book on the matter, form and power of a commonwealth Ecclesiastical and Civil, pinpoints human weakness, but perhaps does not recognise fully the extent of the religious deception which has dominated the minds of men from the very earliest times.

Dr. J. Thomas was far more perceptive and lucid in his expressions on the same subject as follows:-

“The most enlightened believe ‘the lie’ in common with the least. Greekism, Romanism, and Protestantism, in all their ‘Names and Denominations’, are elements of the Strong Delusion. They all pretend to be Christianity; while in reality they are only abominable, and badly executed counterfeits. Delusion and delirium have a near and intimate relationship; and the stronger the delusion the more intense the delirium. In the Apocalypse, therefore, when the ‘strong delusion’, in its effects upon the nations of ‘Christendom’, comes to be ‘signified’ or represented, they are described as having been ‘made drunk’, and as being drunk . . . The drunkenness is . . . not restricted to the Greek and Latin communions; but comprehends all Protestant nations as well. They are all deceived by Satan, by whose energy, and deceivableness of unrighteousness, the soul-merchants of the earth have been

able to establish themselves as the spiritual guides of the people. Blind, intensely blind and intoxicated, they are leading the blind and reeling multitudes into an unfathomable abyss; and they themselves are rapidly approaching that universal bankruptcy, when their commerce in souls will be extinguished' and no man will buy their merchandise any more'. . . . Though they boast of the light and glory of our century; and are upon such admirable terms with themselves as the people of the Lord, basking in the sunshine of his favour and delight; the Scriptures denounce their pretensions, and resolve them into the grossest darkness. . . . Speaking by Isaiah (the Spirit) declares that if any one do not speak according to Moses and the prophets he is a dark body. 'There is no light in him.' Now it is notorious, that the professors of the theological institutions of all sects, and the clerical, or ministerial, orders of all denominations, are grossly ignorant of the Old Testament writings. In presuming, therefore, to preach from or to explain the New, it is utterly impossible for them to speak according to Moses and the Prophets. A man cannot speak in accordance with what he knows little or nothing about. The testimony, therefore, convicts them of utter incompetency. It declares them to be utterly without light: which is equivalent to saying that they are in gross darkness. And, this being the condition of the ecclesiastics, how awfully dark must the people they call the 'laity' be! 'Like priest, like people', — darkness added to darkness until it becomes Egyptian, or darkness to be felt."

Dr. Thomas 1861

Recently the mass media has been filled with news of the Papal visit to Ireland, that island with such a chequered history and still in the throes of great violence and contention. The whole of the popular religious world was interested in the visit, and approved of this first visit of any pope to Ireland; and it is reputed there have been two hundred and sixty four successors to St. Peter. Ostensibly the mission was for the purpose of having 'a peaceful and positive effect'. Moreover the religious leader from Rome declared that it had been his original intention to visit Northern Ireland, and that it was "a great sadness" he had had to change his plans. He added, "It was my intention to go to Armagh as the Primary See, but I am happy to go to Ireland." Continuing, he said, "I have a special blessing for the people of Northern Ireland. I shall speak about them. . . ."

Thus the political division of Ulster from Eire was dismissed in the oblique reference to the religious primacy of Armagh for all Ireland. So in the religious sphere the Pope swept the frontiers away.

That he was rapturously received is without dispute. Twelve thousand people were awaiting him at Dublin airport, where moments after arriving he knelt down and kissed the ground. It was the signal for every Catholic church in Eire and Ulster to ring out their bells to let all and sundry know that their "father" had arrived on their soil.

At Dublin's Phoenix Park a crowd of eight hundred thousand gathered early, joined by many others later, and then estimated to be more than a million people, (about a third of Ireland's population.) As the Pope arrived the Irish National Anthem was played and the Pope inspected the guard of honour, soldiers standing in a line, with their bayoneted rifles raised. Ireland's political leader, greeting him, said:-

"Your holiness, no words could express adequately the immense joy it is for me to have the opportunity of greeting you on your arrival on Irish soil. A long-cherished hope of our people has been fulfilled in your coming. The honour which you have done to Ireland will forever be remembered with appreciation and gratitude by Irish people everywhere.

May I extend to you Holy Father, with the deepest sincerity on behalf of the people of Ireland and on my own behalf a hundred thousand welcomes . . . in the story of our country your coming is a truly historic occasion."

In reply the Pope, speaking in English, said:-

"It is with immense joy and with profound gratitude to the Most Holy Trinity that I set foot today on Irish soil. I come to you as a servant of Jesus Christ, a herald of his Gospel of justice and love, as Bishop of Rome, as a successor of the Apostle Peter. And in the words of Peter, I offer you the greeting of my heart. 'Peace to all of you who are in Christ' . . . I am grateful, moreover, to my brothers in the episcopate who are here to greet me in the name of the whole Church in Ireland that I love so much. I am very happy to walk among you in the footsteps of St. Patrick and in the path of the Gospel that he left you as a great heritage — being convinced that Christ is here; 'Christ before me, Christ behind me . . . Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me. Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks of me.' . . . From this capital city I send my greeting to all the Irish throughout the world. And as I invoke God's blessing on Ireland, I commend all her people to the prayers of our Blessed Lady, to the intercession of Mary, mother of Jesus and Queen of Peace, under whose patronage I place my pastoral visit. Praise be Jesus Christ."

The Primate of Ireland also gave a welcoming speech in which he said:-

“ . . . When our people were persecuted the poet Dark Rosaleen reminded ‘that salvation would come some day: your pardon will come west from Rome.’ Thank God that day has now arrived and it falls to the successor of St. Patrick today, to the successor of St. Peter: a sincere welcome to you, messenger of God. The Irish Church bids your holiness a joyous and heartfelt welcome. We greet you as Christ’s vicar on earth and the successor of St. Peter.”

Bowl upon bowl of the communion Host, each covered with polythene wrappers had been prepared, with an array of priest to distribute to the vast concourse, so that Mass might be celebrated.

In white robes, and white skull cap, and wearing a red cloak, and with a large gold pendant cross around his neck the Pope looked spectacular. Television relayed the scenes to hundreds of millions of people world wide. Naturally all catholic nations were intensely interested, and most other nations too. A total of eighty cardinals and bishops from Africa, America, Asia and Australia as well as Europe were present. Special provision was made in the arrangements for the Pope to meet leaders of other Churches.

Concerning the Irish political controversy, the Pope diplomatically side-stepped some awkward questions. No direct reference was made in any of the Pope’s speeches to the contention over prison conditions in Ulster, where many political offenders are incarcerated. The nearest he came to such a reference was when he made a plea to the politicians not to “cause or condone or tolerate conditions which give excuse or pretext to men of violence.” These words could be read as allowing that there is some justification for criticism over the conditions in Ulster’s detention centres.

It is reported that in private the Pope is not the same man who is beaming at the elderly or tenderly touching babies. A tougher aspect becomes noticeable. At a formal meeting with Irish Church leaders, only a few hours before he left Ireland, the Pope told them it was their responsibility to strengthen the Catholic Church in Ireland. He enjoined them not to be discouraged by difficulties that might appear or accumulate “otherwise we would be unfaithful to the Word of Christ.”

What the Protestant hard liners thought of it all, as they watched the televised pictures of the vast crowds, with half of Ulster’s Roman Catholic population amongst them making their affirmation to the Pope’s leadership, yet remains to be seen. They would have cause to reflect, when they observed the President and Prime

Minister of Ireland paying religious allegiance to the Pope, with the Irish Army parading before him, and the air force flying overhead in the form of a cross!

But some hard line Protestant leaders have already made not unfavourable comments, as follows:-

“A genuine and serious attempt to influence the course of events in the Province.”

And from a Presbyterian leader:-

“Do I sound like a bigot? (seeking reassurance) when I say that although I do not see the Pope as an enemy I felt like a yo-yo as my feelings went up and down while listening to him.”

This event in Ireland is a great sign for those who look for the personal return of Jesus Christ. The papacy continues to rise up in triumph, as never before, and will succeed until the day, when due to divine intervention, there will be a reverse in the tide of popular religious affairs.

D.L.

“PENTRIP”, Black Rock, Portmadoc

Breaking of Bread: Sundays, 11.30 a.m.

Bible Class: Mid-Week.

On September 9th we were pleased to have with us Sister Glenn, Bro. and Sis. Iago, Sis. Francis and Sis. Eunice Francis at the Table of the Lord. At mid-week the subject was from Rev. 2:1. During the week the readings were done together, therefore altogether much help was received and appreciated.

On September 16th and 23rd Sis. Slaney was able to be with us and the time spent together was a benefit.

Warm sunny days added to the pleasure on these occasions.

per D.L.

MANCHESTER: Ryecroft 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.

Such correspondence as we are having has so far not resulted in any promising interest; but we feel glad to be allowed to testify to the “narrow way”. We are hoping that this may result in fruit to His honour and glory.

W.V.B.