

**FEBRUARY 1981**

A Monthly Magazine issued by

# **The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia**

in opposition to the Dogmas of  
Papal and Protestant Christendom

A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

**"Take heed ye be not deceived"**

---

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

**"LEARNING TO CONDEMN SELF"**

**"THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD"**

**"WISDOM FROM THE PAST"**

**"THE SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD"**

**"NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS"**

---

**All Communications**

W. V. Butterfield  
16 Westfield Road,  
Cheadle Hulme,  
Cheadle,  
Cheadle, SK8 6EH

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

## At the Table of the Lord

“By what power . . . ?”

**T**HE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES were written and preserved for the encouragement of all who in faith are seeking to serve the God of Israel and His Son. These righteous acts of Jesus' followers were accomplished under the hand of God, through the power of His Spirit and they were done to give glory to Him. By their faithful works, we can be encouraged and inspired to give honour and praise to our Father in every possible circumstance. If we are able, Brethren and Sisters, to enter into the minds and spirits of those of whom we are reading, it will help us to more wholeheartedly strive to glorify God.

These brethren of old witnessed the ascension of the Lord Jesus to His Father, and no doubt they felt bereft for a time as His presence was taken from them. Yet within ten days the promise which He had made to them was accomplished. Jesus had said:

“I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever; 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.” (John 14:16, 17)

He further enlightened them:

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, — he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” (verse 26)

A promise — an assurance that they would not be left without hope and consolation when Jesus was received unto His Father. The Holy Spirit would surely come to provide all they needed to serve God in witnessing to His word. For this was to be their work, as Jesus told them just prior to His being taken up:

“ . . . *ye shall receive power*, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and *ye shall be witnesses* unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

Now let us more closely consider just what was given to our brethren in their need. Jesus' word “power” is used also in the original as ability, mighty work, and miracle; conveying clearly the thought of a force beyond human capability. This is exactly what was to be given to those apostles by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus had

received that same power when He was baptised by John in Jordan, as we remember:

“... lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending *like a dove*, and lighting on him.”  
(Matthew 3:16)

In what form did that power appear? — “like a dove” we are told. When we think of the power of God’s Spirit, we are inclined to envision a flaming sword, fire, earthquake, lightning, thunder, even as Israel saw and heard at Mt. Sinai when God spoke out of the thick darkness. This awesome sight and sound filled them with fear. Yet this same Spirit was seen descending upon Jesus in the form of a dove. The dove is to most minds a symbol of peace, gentleness; we remember Jesus’ injunction, “... be ye therefore wise as serpents, and *harmless as doves*.” Surely the form in which God sent His Spirit upon the Lord Jesus shows us what that power is like unto those who please Him, for we remember that immediately after that appearance “like a dove”, God said:

“This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.”  
(Matthew 3:17)

At another time the Almighty appeared to Elijah upon Mt. Horeb (Sinai), the mount of God, not in the wind, nor in the fire, nor in the earthquake, but in the “still small voice”. Toward His people, God acts as a comforter, a sustainer, a defender, sometimes with Fatherly correction, but never as a devastating force. Yet what great power there was and still is in that Spirit which descended upon Jesus like a dove, or unto Elijah as that “still small voice”. Jesus, being flesh and yet possessing the power of that Spirit, was immediately tempted to use it for His own honour or glory. But it was not to be, for He denied Himself in that great test from God, He said NO! to His own fleshly yearnings and continued to overcome those fleshly temptations all through His life; He is now with His Father in heaven, possessing all power, and no longer subject to those weaknesses which are part of all men’s natures.

**“— Cloven tongues like as fire —”**

As Jesus had promised, the Comforter, the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles. We read of this in Acts 2:1-4:

“... they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven] as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.”

In this mighty rushing wind was evidence of the same power of God such as Elijah saw on Sinai. To the apostles also it brought no harm. These tongues of fire were a visible manifestation of the great power of God, of the fire of that Spirit and its appearance in this fashion brought comfort and power to those brethren who were "*with one accord in one place.*" Because they were gathered together in that united desire to serve God righteously and to glorify Him, their Father knowing all these things, He sent those "cloven tongues of fire" — a wonderful, tangible assurance to them. It was through this gift from the Almighty that:

"they — began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (verse 4)

Can we share the thoughts and emotions of our brethren as they perceived the power of the Holy Spirit within themselves? They must have been aware of a change, even as Jesus knew that "virtue" (power) was gone out of Him when the woman, seeking in faith to be healed, touched His garment. How those men would rejoice at the blessing manifest, at God's mercy in this great gift, and surely they would experience a great sense of awe, as well as a strong feeling of responsibility to use that power to give glory to God.

How striking it was that the first outward sign of this power was to enable them to "speak with other tongues". They could now communicate in many different languages; how clearly indicative of what work they were to do — to speak, to teach, to preach the word of God to all parts round about Jerusalem and as far away as Rome and Mesopotamia. This they immediately began to do and the response to their efforts is apparent from the fact that those who heard them exclaimed:

"... we do hear them speak in our tongues the *wonderful works of God.*" (verse 11)

The experiences of these faithful men must surely be a benefit for us. As we see them going out, speaking as the Spirit gave them the ability to do so, do we not feel a measure of the same responsibility, the same desire, the same compulsion to reflect in our attitudes and actions, His goodness and also to speak of the wonderful works of God, as we are given opportunity, seeking to give glory to Him in so doing?

### **"Such as I have give I Thee"**

To so speak as God requires, is not always easy, perhaps bringing ridicule and scorn, yet when it is plainly shown that this is what God looks for, can there be a holding back, being fearful of the consequences? What care, however, is needed in our speaking, that the

spirit of a dove is reflected, even in circumstances which are very adverse.

There may even be times when “good deeds” in His name may bring accusation and reproach. Such was the case when Peter and John healed the man lame from his birth, who begged at the temple gate. Peter said to him, “Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” (Acts 3:6). Peter did not possess riches but was able to give to the lame man by the power of the Spirit, a far greater gift — a healing of his 40 year infirmity. How this mighty work gave glory to God. The lame man leaped up and went into the temple “walking and leaping and praising God.” There was no question in his mind as to what had healed him; it was the wonderful power of the Father. However it was because of this marvellous work that Peter and John were seized by the priests, the captain of the temple and the Sadducees. They were asked:

“By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?”

(Acts 4:7)

Peter quickly answered:

“Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified — even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.”

What was the result of Peter’s speaking so plainly?

“When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that *they had been with Jesus.*” (Acts 4:13)

These two men must indeed have seemed simple and lacking in the erudition esteemed by the world, especially so to these experts and doctors of the law. Yet here they were, speaking with assurance and godly force, confounding the learning and special knowledge of these men. From the words, the manner, and the very countenances of Peter and John these men clearly realized that they truly had been in the company of the Lord Jesus, that they were his disciples and reflected a measure of the same power and the same Spirit that was Jesus’. This power caused the authorities to say:

“What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem: and we cannot deny it.” (Acts 4:16)

Unquestionably this was in fulfilment of Jesus' promise to His disciples:

"I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." (Luke 21:15)

Was not this the power of His Spirit working, witnessing, bringing glory to God and do not all His faithful followers find a measure of that power to help in times of trial? What a strength and comfort such assurance should be to us, Brethren and Sisters, as we go about our daily efforts however small or difficult, of witnessing to His word.

The Sadducees and chief priests sought to silence the testimony of Peter and John, and:

"... commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus." (Acts 4:18)

Peter's reply was:

"... we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

How great a temptation it must have been for Peter and John to submit to the decree of the authorities and so escape the wrath of the high priest. But, moved by the Spirit, from a conviction in their hearts, Peter and John knew what was required and steadfastly continued their witnessing, to give glory to Him.

Other faithful men, while tempted not to speak, have been compelled to speak by that same Spirit within. Jeremiah was an example. In the midst of sore tribulation and danger brought about because of his testimony, he said:

"I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a *burning fire* shut up in my bones and I was weary with forbearing and I could not stay." (Jer. 20:9)

That power, the fire of His Spirit was present in Jeremiah's heart so that he could not keep quiet. This same great force then, caused Peter, John, Jeremiah, and many others to speak, to witness to the Almighty's word. If this is in our hearts also, and if our spirits are daily nourished, will it [not work in us, bringing forth a faithful testimony to God's word as circumstances are given to us? If it is truly working, let us pray that *perhaps*, a few of those who hear or see us may in some way perceive that, in spirit, in desire, in love, "these have been with Jesus."

When Peter and John returned rejoicing to their brethren and told them of their experiences, all were glad and instant in giving thanks

to God. They also joined in supplication:

“And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, — that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.” (Acts 4:29, 30)

They didn't pray for escape from persecution or responsibility, but that further help, guidance, and blessing might be granted as they spoke, not holding back, willingly testifying as the Spirit showed them. God answered their prayer directly:

“ . . . when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit; and they spake the word of God with boldness.”  
(verse 31)

How greatly strengthened and inspired were our brethren. How greatly helped we too can be, Brethren and Sisters, if we allow that Spirit to work in us, putting away the flesh with its reluctance and fear, enabling us to move with power from Him, as His witnesses.

We must live and work in quiet trust and steadfast effort. May we then hope that our words and actions may in time show that we, as comparatively “unlearned and ignorant men”, have known and valued that wondrous hope and calling and privilege, allowing us, in His mercy, to share the joy of Jesus' companionship and work. A time to come when all the earth may ask — and find the answer to — “By what power —?”

J.A.DeF.



## Learning to condemn self — a most important Lesson.

**T**HIS IS A LESSON MOST DIFFICULT TO LEARN. Generally self-satisfaction obscures criticism of self. Instead of a lowly attitude, what is more often seen is an appearance of righteousness; of self-sufficiency and self-deception.

How sad that those in *the Truth* should allow themselves to be persuaded that they are righteous, the very claim condemning them; and showing a resentful attitude if they are questioned on their attitude. It would help in learning to condemn oneself if it could be realised that the condemnation is merited, with the appeal which must spring from such a heart — “God be merciful to me a sinner.” — Not merely as a pious exclamation, but a heart-felt profession. If this confession is not made now, it will be too late at the Judgment. It is only pride which prevents us recognising what we really are: and we know all pride is an abomination in the sight of the Most High. Perhaps the worst form of pride is the assumed attitude of being lowly, a mask for a dreadful pride. To show a character which is not *us*, must by its falsity be most displeasing to our Father. How can we by such means hope to put down pride in us, and really change in heart and mind to a character pleasing to the Almighty.

To assume humility, is a means of deceiving our brethren and sisters, ourselves, and what is most important an attempt to deceive the Father in heaven. We may succeed with some brethren; but we shall never deceive God. “Naked and open is everything with Him with whom we have to do.” Deception is the handmaid of pride. It will do its best to give an impression of righteousness; but what is the use of this when all our heart is open to the great God of heaven and the very seeking of being accounted righteous, and well spoken of by our family and brethren is in itself a confession of a serious lack. So our conversation and conduct should be clothed with humility, free of any pretence, or any attempt to be what we are not will be recognised as dreadful pride which we shall spurn with all our being. It is this attitude which will open the door of how we may quell pride in us, and learn to condemn ourselves. If we spent as much time in learning to condemn ourselves as we may do in seeking to approval, we shall be making strides in the development of a godly character. This will be a help to our brethren and what is so important, pleasing to our Father.

**“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.”**  
 (Luke 16:10)

This divine precept is worthy of the most careful consideration. To the human mind (that is our mind) some items of conduct are so insignificant as not worthy of criticism; but that is not so. To permit wrong conduct in however small an item opens the way to greater evils. Does not experience show that wrong although commencing in a small way tends to increase. Many are the brethren who have fallen through this by the deceitfulness of sin. Indulging the flesh a little may not seem so bad but unchecked it is bound to lead to disaster, the complete overthrow of the brother.

When a brother lacks the spirit of the Truth and has to be expelled from the Body for the preservation of the Spirit, looking back it is not possible to see how declension has been unchecked; not necessarily in becoming worldly, but obviously not subject to the Spirit's requirements, and consequently in opposition to the brethren in many ways. It may take a time but it will be finally seen that the Father allows an issue which reveals the failure of the brother from whom separation must take place for the preservation of the Body. Wrong will be seen in the resentment manifest, confirming the brethren's action in taking steps to expel the wrong. Instead of resentment there should be, if the spirit is right, an appeal for help to be shown where wrong; or at least where there is an appearance of wrong. Would not the faithful brother be ready to confess that he would be anxious to be shown, a token of humility. The fact that he shows such a spirit would help discussion and do much to clear the air. Those wrong often fail to do this, and start by manifesting resentment. They do not seem to appreciate that the brethren's efforts are to try and help; not merely to condemn and crush.

An occasion comes to mind when it was being pointed out to a brother where there seemed to be a lack. Instead of this remark being received in the spirit in which it was intended resentment was angrily shown. The exclamation was made in an attempt to cover up. — “Please remember brother I am not of divine nature”, a clear evidence that the help offered was rejected. It is not surprising that this brother left the Truth. How sad that the opportunity to consider, to alter, to seek the spirit of salvation was denied. It is very sad indeed when it is realised that this brother must now face the “judgment” with this guilty mind. Then it will be realised, but all too late that the opportunity granted by God in the brethren's criticisms were all to help and not to put down. How we are beset with pride, an inordinate desire to appear righteous, which in itself should tell us what is wrong. Really as the Apostle tells us we have no occasion in boasting however this may be made to appear as a spiritual trait.

We need to heed the exhortation — “Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith.” This is a serious challenge to *oneself*, but how many really accept it as such. It can be seen as absolutely necessary in others. But what of ourselves? To apply this to a life in the truth, to one who has been entrusted with much work, seems unreasonable and incorrect; but is it? There is no brother no matter how long he has toiled in the “vineyard” can dismiss this injunction without obviously being in grievous peril. Perhaps in this connection there is no more important injunction than given by the Apostle Paul to the brethren at Corinth —

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” (1 Cor. 10:12)

It is perhaps true to remark there are more brethren think they *do* stand than those who have doubts and need to examine, constantly, whether they be in the faith. Yet it is this latter class who are approved, and the reason will appear after a little careful examination. Those who believe they stand have an air of self-confidence which is pride, and we know how this is regarded by Him who is our judge. The others by their doubt about themselves show a spirit which is commendable and will make them careful in word and action. It will not be a pretence to show such humility, and a deference to others. There will be a genuine submitting in spirit, that in them may be fulfilled the command:

“Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of the Lord.”  
(Eph. 5:21)

A little time spent in discovering what is involved in this will be worth while. There will be no attitude in such a brother of being self-opinionated. His speech “will distil as the dew”. When the dew is formed there is not the slightest sound. No wonder that though Moses was so great, and the head of an ecclesia numbering upwards of a million that he was the *meekest man on earth*. We are blessed with this precept and an unsurpassable example.

W.V.B.



## The Household of God

**W**E ARE REMINDED BY PAUL in Ephesians chapter 2 verses 19-21 what we are to be:

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:”

Paul describes here with clear and unmistakable intent what we are to become and how this is possible. To echo these words of Paul in our hearts and minds that we are —

- Fellow-citizens with the saints,
- Of the household of God,
- Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
- An holy temple in the Lord,
- An habitation of God,

And this is the case because Christ is the cornerstone through the functioning of the Spirit. These above points should help to make us value our place, our building in the sight of God.

This is what Paul at that time intended his brethren to consider. To realize the purposefulness of God’s calling out a people to be His dwelling is all important. Paul’s message here then perhaps prompts us to reconsider this building in which we together are joined. The 21st verse tells us that it is in Christ that all “the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord”. This confirms that such a building can only exist through aligning ourselves to Christ so as to be joined together with the closeness necessary to render ourselves an habitation of God. To know that through Christ, God dwells in spirit with us is the power in our fellowship together. It is the only source of strength whereby we are able to be conformed as the hand of God works to shape us into that which is pleasing to Him and do His will. Paul verifies this for us in verse 10 saying:

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

### God's Will

What we are to be, what our walk must be, has been preordained and shown to us by the pattern and example of Jesus. We might ask then what do the good works done by Christ show to help us in our building? Is it not that in all things there must be a pulling down of the flesh in order to be a building up in spirit and that this is only possible by our being able to dwell with Christ. It is important then for us to know how we can dwell with Christ. Paul in Hebrews 3 starting in verse 1 to 6 helps us:

“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.

For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.

And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”

These words reveal that our dwelling within the House of God is dependent upon our ability to hold fast our confidence and our rejoicing in the hope set before us. Really we are required to look for and to contemplate the completion of the House of God and the hope of being part of it. We can only do this however, by professing Christ in acknowledging His place as a Son over God's House, for without Him we must confess and realize we can do nothing.

This is where our confidence or as the word means “assurance” and where the degree of our rejoicing is put to the test. Are we assured in our hearts and minds of the hope we have in Christ? Do we rejoice in that hope at all times both in the midst of trial and in the absence of trial? Our struggle then in the Household of God comes down to a matter of faith — faith which “is the substance (or assurance) of things hoped for, the evidence (or proving) of things not seen”.

In order for our building to stand sure, we must believe that we truly are a part of God's House, for if we doubt, our confidence is not firm and our rejoicing is not full. Yet, our flesh wants us to doubt.

The flesh is relentless in striving to have us question where we stand, and this is especially true and felt most when we have failed. We all experience such a struggle of faith and such is in God's purpose to test us, to see our response when faced with the flesh's taunts, for what God is looking for at such times is to see if we will acknowledge or fail to acknowledge Christ. If we fail to profess Christ we are lost. If we do profess Christ we acknowledge our confidence in the hope of God's promise of an eternal dwelling and thereby show faith in God's provision for us.

Paul in Hebrews chapter 4 verses 14-16 exhorts us to reveal such a faith:

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

It is then by grace we are saved through faith, through belief in Christ. Are we not helped then as Paul reminds us of our place in the purpose of God, as part of his household? Going to Psalm 27 verse 4-6 David states his mind:

“One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple.

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifice of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord.”

Here David's singleness of purpose and confidence in God's dwelling is shown. Here too is the understanding of God's desire to provide in time of need revealed in Christ, the rock and covering. Must we not join in David's spirit of rejoicing as we value our dwelling in the House of God?

M.C.S.

## Wisdom from the Past

**I**T IS AS WELL to look at the work in the Ecclesias in time past in order to gain help for the present.

Dealing with events, the brethren were encouraged by the following words:

“If after your utmost effort, there is no alteration of position, *take further and necessary measures*; and if finally the ecclesia have to take action, and sorrowfully withdraw from him, remember even this should be done in love for the good of the offender.” (Christadelphian number 297 Page 167 March 1889)

### (Sentiment) Ecclesial Guide 1883

“If not successful, Christ commands the interview to be repeated with one or two *others*, and only in the event of *these* failing is the matter to be mentioned to the ecclesia.”

### Same Ecclesial Guide 1883

“His next step (in the case of failure) is to take two or three other brethren with him . . . further influence is brought to bear with fresh and conciliatory minds.”

Nowhere throughout the Christadelphian has it been possible to find controversy on the number of witnesses — what matter if more than two if the one in error is gained?



## Arranging the Shewbread—“Every Sabbath he shall set it in Order” (Lev. 24 vv. 1-9)

**A**S WE LOOK AROUND THE DWELLING we observe another work going on for the help of those in the house. There is the *table of shrewbread* — or as the word is in the original — “*the bread of the faces.*” What are these?

“And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake.

“And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the Lord.

“And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial even an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

“Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the Lord continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.” (Lev. 24, vv. 5-8)

Here, whilst the children of Israel provided the material, the work was to be done by the High Priest — the grinding of the wheat to make it fine, the preparation of each loaf of two tenth deals “by fire”, and their arranging before the Lord. Finally, twelve loaves are seen with their “faces” towards God, and upon their faces frankincense. (Lebonah — white.) How thorough and painstaking is the work of God in preparing a people for His eternal habitation.

“Two tenth deals”, or, as it is in the original, “two tenths”, that is, two omers of flour are to be taken. This was the portion that the children of Israel had to gather on the sixth day for the Sabbath, so that the figure is powerfully significant of a work which is going on in preparing a people ready to be set “in order before the Lord” on the Sabbath. The figure also shows that all who are of the Israel of God are remembered daily, as though each was in the presence of God. Frail human minds can scarcely conceive the measure of His daily love and care: that for all His “little ones”, as Jesus said:

“Their angels (messengers) do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. 18, v. 10)

Constant and never failing remembrance of every need, whether in material or spiritual things has been ensured by the Father, so that

His children may have all the help and comfort they require. And all this is given whilst preparation goes on for an even greater blessing—to be set “in order before the Lord” on the Sabbath. As in the figure, crushing is necessary to produce refinement. Only by trial and suffering can pride and the lusts of the flesh be diminished. A painful process, but the fruits are truly the “peaceable fruits of righteousness”, a delight to behold and expressive of the “beauty of holiness.” In the figure the “faces” of these are covered by frankincense, a fragrant compound, but receiving its name because of its white appearance. This whiteness signifies the righteousness of those who are approved. FrAGRANT in their beauty, they are the accepted of God, and the permanent members of His Son’s house; “whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of our hope, firm and steadfast until the end.” As we look at the loaves upon the table, white and fragrant, we see the result of the work by fire, the work of the Spirit, and through the Spirit we can peer into the Sabbath, when the figure merges into reality.

Now we are in the land upon the mountains of Zion, made *white* by the throng of God’s righteous ones. A voice is heard: it is the voice of the Son of God:

“Until the daybreak, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense.

“Thou art all fair, my love: there is no spot in thee. Come with me from Lebanon (now white), my spouse, with me from Lebanon.

“Look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the dens (low places) from the mountains (that is in every direction and the scene is the same)—

“Thou hast taken away my heart, my sister, my spouse, thou hast taken my heart. . . .

“How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! How much better is thy love than wine! And the smell of thine ointments than all spices!” (S. of S. 4, vv. 6-10).

The words speak with a holy sublimity of the union of Christ and His people for ever — a union of heart never to be broken. If only we can be there to hear these words addressed to us — to be living in His house for ever! — and able to respond for the wondrous grace bestowed — “Hallelujah. Praise ye the Lord.”

W.V.B.

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

“Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a flying roll. . . .

Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for every one that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it; and every one that sweareth (makest solemn affirmation) shall be cut off as on that side according to it.” (Zechariah 5:1, 3)

THE ABOVE WORDS have a focus on the phrase, “this is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth.” Here is a message of impending judgment. Not merely upon one particular part of the world, or upon another, but upon the whole. It might be argued by some that the prophecy was fulfilled in history; that punishment fell upon the nation of Israel, following the warning of God’s prophet who was a member of that nation. But this interpretation, though perhaps allowable to a degree in having fulfilment in the past cannot have been absolutely fulfilled because the whole earth has never been the recipient of God’s judgment. The judgment as pronounced by His irrevocable word, symbolised by a flying roll, or scroll thirty feet in length and fifteen feet in breadth. A descriptive means of showing the weight and power of God’s message of warning; invincible in its “flying” swiftness to bring about unailing fulfilment at the time appointed.

It is at first sight possibly somewhat ambiguous that the message has been pronounced upon all that “steal”, and doubtless requires thoughts to be exercised to elaborate on the implications of this pronouncement. But that there must be in reality such a particularly vicious fact, even though not immediately apparent is here affirmed by God who will not lie, that from one end of the earth to the other such a situation prevails. The fact, of course, which seems to be implied, is that everything which belongs to God which is misused, and therefore used, in short, to thwart or mar the intentions of His divine and grand design, is stealing from Him. But there is also the other aspect concerning every one that “swears”, makes solemn affirmation, shall also merit divine displeasure. Who can these be? The coinage of the realm of the United Kingdom makes the solemn affirmation that the image shown upon the coin is of one upon the throne who is there “by the grace of God.” In the United States the coinage boasts that “in God we trust”. These are solemn affirmations,

which if tested in the light of the world's events and inclinations, are seen to be mere labels used by the authorities, without any qualms about the hollowness of such affirmations, even though God Himself is invoked.

But the sham is coming to an end, as the prophecy declares. It is not a godly world, nor does the world trust at all in God. Nor are His provisions used well. Rather is there a depriving, or a stealing of, His good things in the way human life is organised, conducted and exploited.

The world has become a dangerous place. The world is restless and threatened. The world is filled with greed and ruthless competition, and justice fails in the distribution of God's good provisions. People are being deprived, are even dying through lack of resources that could if used rightly, easily save them; instead the machines of war are liberally fuelled. This to a degree has always been so, but never more so than at the present time in a world that naturally flourishes and abounds.

At the moment of writing the greed for power through transactions with oil, is seen to be causing a conflict in the Middle East, in which lives are being uselessly lost. Iran sends its fighter bombers against Iraqi oil installations in Baghdad and Basra, and when Iraq returns its counter measures and some of its planes are shot down the name of God is invoked in the phrase that the airmen who died had "burned in the fire of Allah's punishment."

Oil is, of course, one of the earth's resources. It is a sad commentary on human behaviour, that as the result of the great demand for that commodity and the desire to obtain a monopoly of it to the detriment of others, great political manoeuvrings are taking place.

An American-led "adequate deterrent force" has been mooted, to be set up in the Middle East, and Japan's support for this has been sought (to which there will doubtless be the acquiescence of a party having comparable ambitions as a result of that nations unceasing appetite for oil.) Saudi Arabia is being bolstered by United States technological aid, added to which is the promise that America is determined to maintain the vital Strait of Hormuz to "keep access to non-belligerents in the region open."

The Western powers are well aware that Russia would, in its greed, be very pleased to get across Iran to the Strait of Hormuz where the approximately eighty oil freighters which pass each day along that waterway, would only then be able to do so according to Soviet inclinations.

So one side or another is prepared to monopolize, either by economic power, or military and political scheming, the resources that have become not only profitable and desirable, but urgently necessary as a result of man's organised modern way of life. In turn the desert lands that bear beneath their sands this precious substance, know they hold something of a balance of power, and use this circumstance to further their own illimitable greed, in their never ending desire to push up the price of what they hold according to the limit demand will accept.

For lives to be lost, and for taxes and impositions to be exacted of mankind to further all such manoeuvres, is to seek for God's provisions in schemes that deny Him as being the owner of everything, and reject Him as the Author of all which is good, who therefore abhors every exploitation and suffering which man imposes on his fellows, as though the resources of God are for man to obtain by any means or stealth to uphold and to keep.

But there is to be an end:-

“ . . . behold a flying roll . . . this is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for everyone that stealeth shall be cut off . . . and everyone that sweareth . . . ”

Men are very able to make a profession of subservience to God. They solemnly affirm it. But in works this is denied. There are many nations who are weak in technological and economic development, but who have great riches in raw material sources, and of course man-power potential. They have in the past been suppressed, they have been exploited, by “Christian” nations who have waxed rich at their expense, and would keep it so, just as the rulers of richer nations would in a lesser, yet identical intention, keep their “working classes” in their place. Yet there is and has been, the sending forth of “Christian” missionaries to such miserable people, and much talk of the need for “Christianising” influences to give their own people a moral and cultural lead and motivation, to enhance the quality of their lives. But these things are but solemn affirmations (swearings) without any real and active fruits.

So the newspapers churn out their continual propaganda of hate and the television screens the lurid scenes which are such a harmful influence to the young.

The following letter written to the news media with obvious desire to lift the cover that hides man's true state of things; and published by a paper of liberal inclination seems worth reading and quoting:-

“Numbers sang again the Christmas hymn with the words:

'O hush the noise ye men of strife, And hear the angels sing'. Soon after the Christmas break, the arms factories will continue spewing out their products and salesmen will be obeying the Government's urge to sell them at a profit.

We have been told repeatedly over the past few weeks that there can be no different treatment for those who commit crimes for what they claim to be political motives. All governments of the so-called Christian west are motivated politically in preparation for the greatest crime of all — the incineration of vast numbers of people who live under different political systems from our own.

The Christian church must either unite in total opposition to all war and preparation for it, or discard all its theology of Christ the Suffering Servant. We cannot have it both ways. Either we believe in a God whose almighty power is revealed in undefended, crucifiable love, or we believe in a demonic, monstrous power steeped in the gore of centuries of evil. We will emulate the God we acknowledge."

Yes, men will emulate the God they acknowledge, and their works show that for all their solemn affirmations to the contrary, that it is greed and the consequent strife of trouble and war that is important in their eyes.

But the warning of God through His prophet is not an idle one. There is, and is to be a "flying roll"; there will yet be a rushing, swift fulfilment of the word of His mind and power, which will bring about the removal, the cutting off, of all that is so false and worthless in the world of the present time.

D.L.



## News from the Ecclesias

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

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m. Sunday School 1.30 p.m. Bible Class: Midweek: Forestville and Orchard Park. Alternate Week: Revelation Study.

We rejoice at the guidance and help granted in His house. The work with one seeking His way of life continues to progress.

The Sunday School party is planned, God willing, for February 14th.

We are grateful for the opportunity of getting together that the holidays allow. While the holidays themselves are not celebrated, the opportunity for the companionship of those of like mind is a source of help and strength.

J.A.DeF.

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

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

It has been good to receive the many letters and to know how each one is coping here and overseas.

There are few visitors at present, but we are endeavouring to be prepared for any who may enquire concerning our stand.

Some people have been attracted recently to the notice of witness on our gate, but did not pursue the matter. But we await whatever is required of us as opportunities may present us with a work to do.  
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.

From time to time we receive appreciation of the magazine and the desire for further copies to be sent. We would that this might lead these to taking a stand for The Truth. We know that this might entail a separation from those who have an apparent zeal but so far have not determined to take a stand with those, may be in weakness, who are endeavouring at all costs to uphold The Truth.

We would that these should realise their sympathy is appreciated but this is not enough.

Action and works determine whether they are on the Lord's side, and if not, will it not be a painful revelation when the Lord comes to hear from Him the irrevocable judgment — “depart from me I never knew you.”

The time of opportunity must be fast running out.

W.V.B.