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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

“Set yourselves, stand ye still . . .”

HOW STRIKING IS THE RECORD of the kings of Israel and Judah. All of them ruled over God’s chosen people, all were allowed to reign by Him only, yet how few proved to be righteous, pleasing to the Almighty. We think of those who were faithful: David, Hezekiah, Josiah, and even these failed at times. Why, we might ask, is this record preserved by the Spirit? Is it to help us in our struggles to honour and obey the God of Israel, to reveal how He blesses those who are striving to serve Him and in time, brings evil upon those who knowing Him, fail to glorify His name?

Our recent reading concerns Jehoshaphat, whose name means *judged* of God. Does not God judge, look at, examine, test all of His people, for the purpose of passing sentence upon them, as the word judgment implies? To some Christ will say, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom.” To others He will say, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Matthew 25. Perhaps if we can discern the mind, the works, and the spirit of Jehoshaphat we will find guidance as we labour to be among those blessed when Jesus returns to judge His people.

We first read of Jehoshaphat in II Chronicles 17. He was the son of Asa, a wicked king of Judah, but:

“The Lord was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim; but *sought* to the Lord God of his fathers, and walked in his commandments, and not after the doing of Israel.”
(verses 3, 4)

Because this king *sought* the Lord, he was helped to walk in a way pleasing to God and therefore knew His blessing:

“Therefore the Lord stablished the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents; and he had riches and honour in abundance. And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord . . .” (verses 5, 6)

Jehoshaphat *sought*. This means, asked, cared for, searched, diligently enquired. It implies an active work in pursuing God’s guidance,

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help, and counsel. How important then, that we search and diligently enquire for *His* way, not our own. We remember when David brought the ark to Jerusalem, he placed it on a new cart, and God being displeased, brought a breach upon him and upon Israel, causing them to stop and to seek where they were wrong. After a search of God's law David knew and said:

“... the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for we *sought him not after the due order.*” (I Chron. 15:13)

The king and the Levites had brought up the ark in the manner *they* thought best, on a cart. Had they searched the word of God, as they did *after* the breach, it would have been carried on the shoulders of the Levites as He commanded. They would have done it after the “due order”. These words, “due order” come from the root for judgment. How important it is then, Brethren and Sisters, that all we do is in accordance with God's judgments, that we carefully consider — *first*, “Will God be pleased or will He condemn?” With great care we may be permitted to act in “due order” and thus avoid a breach such as David experienced. However, David by these circumstances, as well as others, grew in spirit and was able to say, “I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.” Psalm 34:4. Must not this be our determination? — to seek Him in all our ways and doings, so that we can move in *His* judgment, not our own? Even in the midst of difficulties, trial, or indecision, God is *there* and will hear those who diligently seek Him.

In captivity Judah was told:

“Thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you in causing you to return — ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall *search for me with all your heart.* And I shall be found of you. . . .” (Jer. 29:10-14)

This helps us to know *how* we must seek. We must search for Him with *all our hearts*. If the heart is single, circumsised, the flesh put away so that the sole desire is to find God's help, only then can this be hoped for, His help to grow in the Spirit.

“His heart was lifted up”

Certainly this singleheartedness must have been in Jehoshaphat, for we are told that “his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord. . .” With this great help, he wanted to lead Judah back to God's law.

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He sent forth princes and Levites who:

“. . . taught in Judah and had *the book of the law of the Lord with them*, and went about throughout all Judah, and taught the people.” (II Chron. 17:9)

What a change and blessing this would bring as those teachers, having the “law” with them taught God’s judgments, making known the “due order” — His desires for His people to search out with *all their heart*.

“An unholy alliance”

The record concerning Jehoshaphat continues:

“Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance; and joined affinity with Ahab.” (II Chron. 18:1)

Assuredly this joining affinity with Ahab, the evil king of Israel could not have been pleasing to God, certainly it would not be His counsel to Jehoshaphat, and certainly could never prosper. We must conclude then that Jehoshaphat moved in his own judgment, not seeking the Lord. As a result we know he soon got into difficulty as Ahab attempted to have *him* killed in the battle, being dressed as the king of Israel. It was hoped thereby that Ahab would be spared. However the king of Judah was spared and by what appeared to be “chance”, Ahab was killed. When the king returned to Jerusalem, God sent His seer to show him the Almighty’s judgment. Jehu, the seer said:

“. . . Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord.” (II Chron. 19:2)

How quickly, how justly comes the judgment of God upon His people as He in love seeks to correct and help all such who fail. It is with great mercy and care He chastens His children.

When Jehoshaphat “joined affinity” with Ahab, there was more involved than going up to battle with him. To “join affinity” means to give away in marriage, to make a family relationship. It is a matter of record that the son of Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, was married to Athaliah, the daughter of king Ahab and the notorious Jezebel. It may even be when Jehoshaphat “joined affinity” with Ahab the marriage between Jehoram and Athaliah was arranged. We know too, of the evil that Athaliah wrought in Judah, conspiring, killing the

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king's sons, usurping the throne. All this long range evil may have begun when Jehoshaphat "joined affinity" with Ahab. Can we see why God through His seer strongly rebuked and judged Jehoshaphat? Yet His judgment was merciful as Jehu continued:

"Nevertheless there are good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land and hast *prepared thine heart to seek God.*" (II Chron. 19:3)

Only when God can see such a heart, even after so serious a failing, may forgiveness and help be granted. He saw this in the king of Judah and the subsequent works of Jehoshaphat evidenced this.

". . . he went out again through the people . . . , and brought them back unto the Lord God of their fathers." (verse 4)

Here was repentance, a work, a demonstrating that he was truly seeking God, and then we read how he encouraged the judges he had set in the land.

"Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the *judgment.*" (verse 6)

Here we find again the king's awareness and need for the infallible judgment of the Lord. May we each one, seek to grow in that awareness.

"Jehoshaphat — set himself to seek the Lord"

God soon brought a test upon this king to prove whether he was wholehearted in this determination. In II Chronicles we read in chapter 19, of the great multitude of Moab and Ammon who came up to make war against Judah. What would the king do — to whom would he turn?

"Jehoshaphat feared and set himself to *seek the Lord* and proclaimed a fast through out all Judah." (II Chron. 20:3)
He had learned. He quickly turned to God with all his heart,

remembering:

"If when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name is in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help." (verse 9)

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Also he prayed:

“O, our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee.”

(II Chron. 20:12)

Here was heartfelt trust, a true longing for God’s judgment. How needful such a spirit is, at all times but especially in time of hard trial, weakness, and fear, for the only sound and righteous decision must come from our Father. We know that God in mercy answered Jehoshaphat through saying:

“Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; *for the battle is not yours, but God’s.*” (verse 15)

How difficult indeed, it is for human nature, our trembling flesh, to recognize that truly the battle is in God’s hands, and so we must put our trust in Him and in His judgments. Whatever the conflict may be, whether against the great host of Moab and Ammon, against giants such as Goliath whom David slew believing “the battle is the Lord’s and he will give you into our hands.”, or whether against our own familiar enemy, the flesh with its lusts — for this may be our greatest battle — we are never without help if we do indeed put our trust in Him. Our Father’s words to Jehoshaphat show us how we can find that help.

“... set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord.” (verse 17)

Not easy to do, as we know, but God’s instructions are clear. “Set yourselves”. We find this word is often used as “*present yourselves before the Lord*” as in Deut. 31:14.

“... Behold, the days approach that thou must die: call Joshua and *present yourselves* in the tabernacle that I may give him a charge.”

Moses and Joshua “set themselves” before the Lord, waiting for His instruction, ready for whatever God would require. In times of trial, of uncertainty or fear, how needful it is, Brethren and Sisters, that our mind be “set”, totally available and ready to hear His guidance. A similar thought is conveyed in the Spirit’s words, “stand ye still” for they imply an enduring, an abiding, a waiting for the hand of God to indicate. How hard we mortals find it is to

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stand still and endure when danger or troubling and wearisome problems are present; for our nature wants to do something — anything — immediately. But does not experience show us the folly of a precipitous approach rather than the one which is simply to present our *willing* selves, waiting upon the Lord, “standing still”? An uplifting example of this and its benefits is found in Numbers 9 where certain in Israel were prevented from keeping the Passover in the first month as required, for they were defiled. In the normal course of events one might feel that this was truly regrettable, but nothing could be done, for the law was very specific. The Passover *must* be kept in the first month, so they would have to miss keeping this feast. However Moses said, verse 8:

“*Stand still*, and I will hear what the Lord will command concerning you.”

God answered Moses’ supplications and instructed that these could keep the feast in the second month but great care must be taken lest such a blessing be abused. A merciful provision granted, notwithstanding the specific wording of the law, because there was a “standing still” and a willingness to wait for the judgment of the Lord, a searching for His mind, in trust and submission.

Returning now to Jehoshaphat, we have read what happened to the host of Moab and Ammon. They destroyed each other without the children of God being required to lift a hand against them, truly the “salvation of the Lord” because they under Jehoshaphat’s leadership did “set themselves and stood still” looking for that salvation. What good counsel for ourselves, Brethren and Sisters, to present ourselves before the Lord and to wait upon His hand, in each trial or important question we face, large or small.

“Because Thou hast joined thyself . . .”

In the example of Jehoshaphat we find warnings which are necessary lest we slip away from the need to depend upon God. In II Chronicles 20 we read how this king again joined himself to the king of Israel, “who did very wickedly.” Yet again the word of the Lord through one of His messengers came to the king.

“Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works.” (Verse 37)

How forgetful was Jehoshaphat to once again join himself with Israel. Hard to believe after his earlier experiences. We can put ourselves, as did the king of Judah, in real danger when we fail to

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remember God's blessings and warnings, when we fail to "set ourselves" and "stand still", but rather move in our own wisdom and desires.

Do we not see, Brethren and Sisters, how righteously and justly God judged and worked with Jehoshaphat to bless, to warn, to chasten, to encourage, to forgive, and also to hinder when he was going in the wrong way? Does not the same merciful Father work with us as long as we are ready to present ourselves in a spirit to be shown and then to . . . "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord."?

J.A.DeF.



Christadelphians Then and Now

Fellowship

ROBERT ROBERTS was so anxious for the preservation of the Truth, that he felt keenly the danger when numbers became large. He was very conscious that it would hasten declension. The feeling of dependence and the need of help was most keenly felt in his early days, when in the beginning six met for the Breaking of Bread. Then when later in Birmingham, the number swelled into hundreds. In such a large assembly it was impossible to know each other; much less to feel part of each other, sharing problems and difficulties. When in Birmingham as a visitor, and passing some carrying the Christadelphian hymn book after the Sunday morning meeting, the reply to the question — “Are they Christadelphians?” the answer was illuminating, especially in retrospect — “Yes, they must be, but I don’t know them. They sit on the other side of the hall.” A telling testimony that there cannot be that closeness between members, when numbers are large. Indeed, in many instances there is no closeness at all. Going to the Sunday morning meeting became little different for the majority than going to a chapel.

The understanding of the doctrine of fellowship had vanished; and in the Christadelphian magazine there is the same lack. Fellowship is equated to companionship — thus:-

“33 campaign leaders are making preparations so that campaigners can join them for a week in *fellowship*, and in preaching to those in darkness around us.” (our underlining)

What a poor thing would divine fellowship be if it were as the foregoing indicates, limited to a week. Fellowship transcends such a faulty notion. It is indeed a communion with the Father, and if it were to be limited either by time or place, would mean breaking of the fellowship essential to life. The divine conditions for this fellowship are clear and very simple, and stated in the scripture in a way that can be easily understood:-

“If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

But if *we walk in the light*, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.” (1 John 1:6-7)

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“Fellowship not merely companionship.”

A perusal of the “news” in the official Christadelphian Magazine will show that fellowship is regarded only as companionship. The following quotation will confirm this:

“We are sorry to lose the help and fellowship of Bro. E.—and Sis. A.—whom we commend to”

It will at once be clear to the thoughtful that this reveals a lack of understanding of the doctrine of fellowship, debasing it to nothing more than companionship. But “fellowship” as revealed in the Truth is first with the Father, and then there can follow fellowship one with another. It is a fruit of the Spirit; it is eternal (subject to conditions) and is world-wide.

The canker of apostasy can be seen in the Christadelphian “news” generally, as for instance:

“E . . .

After a long illness Sis. L. M. has transferred from B, and we pray . . . that she will be happy in our fellowship.”

It is obvious that this refers merely to companionship, and not to the great spiritual truth that divine fellowship embraces all who have *the truth*, wherever they may be situated in the world.

Other quotations:

“We transfer to the fellowship of the Southport Ecclesia Sis. T—now resident at ‘Rest Haven’.”

“We welcome Bro. D.G.—from Leeds (West) and look forward to his fellowship.”

Regarding this one it might be asked did they not have his fellowship before he moved? If they did not then would he not be out of fellowship? This illustrates the confusion which follows from an erroneous understanding of fellowship.

Fellowship is a very different thing than companionship, which those who have apostatised from the Truth fail to recognise. It is sad indeed, to see those who once had the Truth, submerged in the worldly thinking on fellowship. They have reduced this from the divine to the merely human level. In such a position they cannot understand, much less appreciate, the superb spiritual qualities enshrined in the godly understanding of the doctrine of fellowship.

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We cannot do better than look at the simple words of scripture for a correct understanding of the doctrine of fellowship.

“Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth:

But if *we walk in the light*, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

“Walking in the Light.”

This scarcely needs any explanation. Jesus said,

“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

(John 8:12)

No figure could be more powerful to describe the “truth” and show its contrast with error. Without light men stumble, flounder and fall. This is the general picture of mankind, leading to dreadful results. The *Word* is very searching in showing how and why these arise:

“From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” (James 4:1-3)

In every country there is testimony to the sterling truth of these words. Some countries are on the brink of civil war, as for example in Spain; others are plagued with divisive calls from their various leaders. There can be no deliverance from this miserable position until He comes who is the “light of the world”. Present events over the face of the earth show that this world-shattering event is nigh, and soon all nations, and all people therein will be called to embrace that which is right, so eventually bringing peace on earth. This as the Scriptures reveal will not be by the sword of man, but by the Word of the Lord Jesus, when:

“He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

(Isaiah 2:4)

W.V.B.

Witnessing by Light

WE ARE HELPED through our portions in John to see revealed there the spirit of the Lord Jesus in relation to the way He moved and was guided in the work of His witnessing. Often we find Jesus was confronted with adversity, often danger, yet His spirit was to push on and to do what God required of Him. This speaks of the great determination that was Jesus'. Likewise, we must be determined in the work given to each of us; to do it no matter what the cost, in order that the work be God's and not our own. How helpful this record of Jesus' can be to us in this endeavour.

Looking to the record of Jesus in John 7:1, we read:

“After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.”

On the surface this would appear contradictory to the work of Jesus in witnessing to the Jews. But no — as it was the time of the feast of Tabernacles, first went the disciples, and He came after.

“But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.”

(verse 10)

Jesus went up knowing that the work of witnessing must be done, and although He went not up openly, we see it was not long before He went to the temple and spoke in the midst of the Jews, of God's promise and purpose, and what it was that must be done in order to accomplish this.

Likewise, in John 8:59, at the end of His speaking to the Jews, they took up stones to cast at Him:

“Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them and so passed by.

Obviously, it was the spirit of God working with Jesus, allowing Him to perform exactly the work that God had given to Him. It wasn't long, we see, where again the Jews took up stones to stone Him:

“Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.”

(John 10:31)

For blasphemy, they said; but Jesus reminded them it was really an attempt to put down His good works.

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We see Jesus' understanding of the work given to Him by God, and those works were performed resulting in the miracles, the confounding of the Scribes and Pharisees' questions and likewise here to the Jews. We see what the minds were who were adverse to Jesus. They spoke saying He was making Himself God. This is what they were seeking to do — by their own thinking, they sought to put down Jesus because His spirit was in accord to God's, and not their own. There was no spirit in those Jews — Jesus answered them saying:

“Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?
If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came,
and the scripture cannot be broken;

Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent
into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the
Son of God?

If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I
do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may
know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

(John 10:34-38)

Jesus was laying the ground work obviously, for any who might see in those works, One who was moved by the Spirit and not anything that mortal man could do. Only the Son of God could do these things and His appeal was “believe in the works”. This, however we know fell on deaf ears.

“Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea
again. His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late
sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?”

(John 11:7-8)

The normal response of the flesh, knowing that the Jews were indeed laying wait trying to trip up Jesus. Yet Jesus, knowing His hour had not yet come, had been helped by God to move in and out of danger, replied:

“Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in
the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this
world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because
there is no light in him.” (John 11:9-10)

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How dependent Jesus was on the Word of God, knowing there would be no stumbling or falling down if there was a walking according to the Word and purpose of God.

Must not this dependence be so with us? As we go about our daily living, in the witnessing we are required to do — we must not be prevailed against until the work is done. We are given an appointed time — a time of testing — to reveal the strength of our convictions. How can we succeed in this struggle to go up and attain the Hope? As Jesus said in verse 9, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world”. By the light of the world — by the example of the Lord Jesus are we helped.

Going to John 12:35-36 we see how important the understanding of these words were to Jesus’ disciples:

“Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.”

And how important was Jesus’ understanding of His place as the Light of the world. He exhorts us to walk while ye have the light, use the light and, if we do, there will not be any stumbling. Jesus perfectly followed that Light, and the Spirit was indeed there so that He did not stumble and fall, because He depended so on that Light. This speaks to us of the separation so necessary between light and darkness. If there is a walking in darkness, there is no light — the Spirit cannot and will not work. Only as there is a walking in light is there help given.

Also in John 9:4-5 Jesus tells us:

“I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.
As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

Jesus recognized that the time that was given to Him — the day — in essence His life, was to be spent in showing that light; knowing that any who saw this light, might be helped to walk and not stumble. Jesus fulfilled that of which God’s word spoke to Him; and, in speaking these words, He desired that light to be revealed and help others.

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John 8:12 further speaks of this light:

“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

This was what Jesus was referring to in regard to the light when He said, “If any man walk in the day-light — he stumbleth not.” Light shows the way in times of darkness — adversity and trial; and He knew how that light enabled Him to overcome, rather than taking up vengeance against those who were against Him. How important this light must be to us. By this light, we can overcome our flesh, and so walk with the Lord Jesus in righteousness.

We go to Jeremiah 31:6-9 and find the same spirit and understanding expressed, regarding God’s people:

“For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God.

For thus saith the Lord; Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel.

Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither.

They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.”

This speaks likewise of the great hope set before all who indeed desire that light. There will be no stumbling — the purpose of God, as the Father of Israel is establishing His Word, and the fulfilment of that Word. How important is this straight way, being led in it, and following in it. Did not Jesus follow in this way? Naturally, He did many things which were hard for Him. Likewise, we will be helped in our determination to overcome and not stumble.

Paul felt this way as recorded in II Corinthians 4:6-11:

“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

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But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."

How important the Light is! How well Paul understood the struggle and trial; and, yet, how well he understood the light; that light which we are allowed to see and look on today, as we read of the Lord Jesus and of His determination to overcome.

Can we, in our trials, rely on this light? We must for it is only by this light we can be saved and have the Hope of Israel. In trial, testing and in whatever distress we may find ourselves we can find help and keep from stumbling if truly we are following that Light.

M.C.S.



“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 two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.”

(Rev. 13:11)

IN THE HISTORICAL CONNECTION Dr. Thomas had this to say:

The Ascending of the Beast out of the Earth.

“The originating and establishing, which constitute the ascending, rising, or coming up of a dominion, are a work of power, conflict, conquest, and of time. The commencement of such a work is preceded by what is now commonly styled a *Situation*; or concurrence of circumstances and agents, which, when a certain impetus is imparted to them impels them in a certain course to results, neither contemplated nor capable of being controlled. This obtains in regard to the ascending of the Two-Horned Beast out of the earth. The circumstances of the time, the questions agitated, and the ambitions of the leading spirits of the day, acting and reacting upon one another, was the situation which originated and ultimately developed the dominion symbolised. . . .”

So the Doctor looked back to events of the eighth century when the Papacy was somewhat threatened, but vigorously spoke out against that which would oppose. Pope Gregory the second wrote at that time in the following terms:-

“ . . . Unarmed and naked, we can only implore the Christ, the prince of the heavenly host, that he will send unto you a devil, for the destruction of your body and the salvation of your soul.

You declare, with foolish arrogance, I will despatch my orders to Rome: I will break in pieces the image of St. Peter; and Gregory, like his predecessor, Martin, shall be transported in chains, and in exile, to the foot of the imperial throne. Would to God that I might be permitted to tread in the footsteps of the holy Martin; but may the fate of Constans serve as a warning to the persecutors of the Church. . . . But it is our duty to live for the edification and support of the faithful people; nor are we reduced to risk our safety on the event of a combat . . . we can remove to the distance of four and twenty stadia, to the first fortress of the Lombards, and

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then — you may pursue the winds. Are you ignorant that the popes are the bond of union, the mediators of peace, between the East and the West? The eyes of the nations are fixed on our humility, whom all the kingdoms of the west hold as a God upon earth, whose image, St. Peter, you threaten to destroy. The remote and interior kingdoms of the west present their homage to Christ and His Vice regent. . . .

Abandon your rash and fatal enterprise; reflect, tremble, and repent. If you persist we are innocent of the blood that will be spent in the contest: may it fall on your own head."

The messages of the Popes have been efficacious in the past in promoting respect for the church. The same also can be said for these present times.

At the time of writing the Pope is pursuing his Far East tour. When he arrived at the Philippines a crowd estimated at more than two and a half million people swarmed in the streets of Manila. Speaking from the State room of Malacanang Palace, and broadcast live over the Television network throughout the seven thousand islands of the Philippines, to the forty million adherents of the Church, the Pope's theme of address was on the position of Church and State. He urged that people should work together in the Philippines "in a spirit of mutual respect." But he qualified this remark by saying that people would have faith in safe-guarding their security and the promotion of the well being of the State only to the extent in which they shared responsibilities. The Philippine President obviously much impressed by the Papal visit said to the Pope that he hoped "you will return this State and our Church back to Jesus Christ." To a meeting with an assembly of priests the Pope said, "You are priests and religious, you are not social or political leaders or officials of a temporal power."

The importance of the occasion for the Philippine Government was evidenced by the twenty one gun salute, the guards of honour at the airport, and an escort of fighter planes overhead as the Pope arrived.

Then on to Japan to be welcomed at Tokyo by the Japanese Foreign Minister, along with the Cardinal representative of the four hundred thousand Japanese Catholics. The main theme of the Pope's message to the Japanese was that he came to their land "as a pilgrim of peace", paying tribute at the same time to the "venerable culture" of the country. Following up his initiative the Pope made his way to Hiroshima, where on the historic site of the atom bomb explosion he addressed a crowd of twenty thousand people. "We will

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work untiringly for disarmament and the banishing of all nuclear weapons", he said. "Let us take a solemn decision now that war will never be tolerated or sought as a means of resolving our differences." "To the heads of State and Government I say: Let us pledge ourselves to peace with justice." Continuing he reminded the crowd of the "life of so many people which was snuffed out in one fiery moment" and then appealed to "the whole world on behalf of life, on behalf of humanity, on behalf of the future" to organise a new peace and a new order.

This was a message the world wanted to hear, a message eminently suited to the mood of the Japanese people, who have known the suffering of nuclear fission used as a weapon upon themselves. The Japanese Government obviously thought that the visit of the Pope was a very important occasion, they have never had such a visit before, hence meetings with the Emperor and the Prime Minister.

The Pope also had a message for China. He said that the Church had "no worldly or political ambitions" in China. There has already been a noted relaxation by the Chinese in allowing Catholic priests to enter China from Hongkong, the papal message doubtless would further the continuation of such a relaxation.

It has been indeed a remarkable and unprecedented journey, and undoubtedly has elevated the Papacy in the eyes of the world.

Britain is now looking forward to the scheduled visit of the Eminent representative of the Church of Rome, arranged for 1982. The Archbishop of Canterbury is already talking of a service at Canterbury Cathedral which the Pope will attend. The Anglican leader said that this arrangement would be the "central ecumenical event" of the Papal visit.

A British politician speaking on the subject of this intended visit had this to say:-

"The Pope was a head of state, but the proposed visit had been described as a "pastoral", a visit to members of his flock. 'But to allege, that by being so or even intended, the visit would be divested of its public character, and therefore of its political implications, is a mere prevarication, behind which no one serious or sincere, whatever his own ultimate judgement on the matter, could take refuge from responsibility.' If the Pope visited Great Britain it would be in consequence of a political decision taken by the Government. The Government was and would be responsible. Only in England was the crown the supreme judicial authority in the national church and thus the political nerve directly touched by a Papal visit.

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His complaint lay against those who were ready on every occasion to renounce their national inheritance of liberty and sovereignty.

It may perhaps be thought an exercise in pedantry and historianism to discuss the implications of a Papal visit to Great Britain when apparently more real aspects of national sovereignty have been lost and the campaign to regain them has scarcely begun.

“But I do not agree. Symbols live when concrete things perish. The last possession of a nation, without which it cannot renew itself, are its national symbols. Can the British people really be indifferent when their Government is able to sacrifice those symbols without even appearing to be conscious that it is doing so?”

Of course, this is a cry into the wind. The British Government can hardly refuse what the Japanese have conceded.

So history is repeating itself, but more intensely and in far greater measure, as the words of the Revelation come to pass in this final fulfilment; and the words of the Doctor from over a century ago now take on a zestful appropriateness:-

“This constitution of things makes it ‘diverse from the ten horns’. There was no independent Eyes and Mouth for each of them. If there had been a pair of Eyes and Mouth for each horn there would have been a Pope for each kingdom; or ten contemporary popes, as well as ten contemporary kings. But this would have been confusion worse confounded than it was. On the contrary, one pope or Papal Dynasty, was deemed sufficient for the whole ecclesiastical requirements of the worshippers of the beast, both of the earth and sea. . . . This New Dominion of the Two Dynasties styled ‘the Pope and Emperor’, is John’s Two Horned Beast of the Earth. . . .”

In these times it is the politico-ecclesiastical alliance now developing.

D.L.

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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.

The Sunday School Party was held on February 14th and was enjoyed by all. We are grateful that opportunity is granted for such beneficial and enjoyable companionship.

Our minds and supplications are with those who are ill or in need, knowing that all our needs can be provided for by our merciful Father.

The perplexing problem of inflation, unemployment and recession fill our daily headlines. How comforting and how blessed we are to know that there is a divine solution to all these problems so unsolvable to men, the coming of the Kingdom of God, ruled over in righteousness by Jesus Christ. J.A.DeF.

“PENTRIP”, Black Rock, Portmadoc.

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

As we contemplate the last month and the severe weather we feel very grateful for health and strength restored, and for the visit of Brother and Sister D. Lancaster for Sunday 22nd February. The spiritual food received at the morning meeting was much appreciated, and also in the afternoon Class at which one attended. “Take my yoke upon you” was the subject.

We are indeed privileged to hear the pure words of Truth.

The effort to travel here at this time was most welcome.

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.

Copies of this magazine are being sent to a wide circle of Christadelphians who we hope will be able to discern in the articles the True Doctrine of Fellowship.

It will be appreciated that this is the keystone of the truth, readers are invited to send for a pamphlet which we publish:-

“The Doctrine of Fellowship”

Gladly will we do our best to answer questions on this all important issue, for without an understanding of this doctrine there is bound to be confusion and merely opinion instead of a clear view of what God requires for salvation.

With advancing age we have those who are bound to feel the weakness of our present nature, but are glad to say that in some whose condition gave cause for anxiety there is an improvement, for this we are thankful. W.V.B.