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A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

"Take heed ye be not deceived"

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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

“... The joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off”

HOW MUCH HELP there is found in the experiences of Nehemiah, who lived in a truly difficult time, an anxious time for Judah and Jerusalem. Yet God's hand was very much with His people. He is close at hand today as well, Brethren and Sisters, to bolster and to direct in the midst of hardship, sore trials, and uncertainties, all of which seem to indicate that the return of the Lord Jesus could be drawing very near. How laborious is the struggle against the flesh, our greatest enemy, the one which we must conquer if we are to hope for a place with Him when He does return.

We have read about the dedication of Jerusalem's wall, that wall which had taken so much toil and courage to rebuild.

“At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites — to bring them to Jerusalem to keep the dedication with *gladness* . . .” (Neh. 12:27)

Gladness involves exceeding joy, a word derived from one meaning to brighten up, to cheer up. Further use of this word is found in verse 43.

“Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and *rejoiced*: for the Lord had made them rejoice with great *joy*: the wives also and the children rejoiced: so that the *joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off*.”

The joy of Jerusalem, the city founded on peace, the true hope of the true Israel. Is this not our hope? What supreme gladness will be known when Jerusalem is once again established as the city of God, sending out of it to all, the law of God, ruled over by the Son of God, the Prince of Peace. A measure of this great rejoicing was known by God's people when this wall so long ago was dedicated. We can see why. The city had been destroyed by the Babylonian power, had lain desolate for seventy years and now was being restored under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah exactly as their God had promised. This reassurance has been left for us to consider as we have read in Nehemiah 11:32 is very impressive, recording for us how some of those restored to the land were living in *Anathoth*. What is the significance at this particular time? We remember how, many years earlier Jeremiah was told by God to redeem the field in Anathoth, which was in the possession of the king of Babylon and seemed far from the reach of any captive Israelite. At that time God said:

“Fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye say, It is desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans. Men shall buy fields for money, — in the land of Benjamin and in the places about Jerusalem — for I will cause their captivity to return.” (Jer. 32:43, 44)

Here was living evidence of God’s unfailing purpose and promise. Those who had returned from captivity lived again in Anathoth, surely bringing joy and gratitude to those who discerned this promise and purpose.

Does not God look for joy in His people? — for they have great cause to rejoice through His deliverance now and in the hope of that eternal one when Jesus comes again.

“For the joy set before Him”

Let us look at the circumstances in Nehemiah’s time, for in doing so we can be helped to discern how *we* can grow in this quality of the Spirit. Joy, not simply a lightminded exuberance, but a quiet, steady gladness that can lift up when things are difficult or seem overwhelming. If we are able to look beyond the immediate situation to the hope held out to us, we will grow and experience even now this joy of Jerusalem. This sustained the Lord Jesus in His unceasing struggle to be the unblemished Lamb. We read in Heb. 12:2 of His strength.

“... for the *joy that was set before him* (he) endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

What does this teach us? Endure means to bear up under and also is used as patience in the first verse of Heb. 12:

“Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight (encumbrance), and the sin which doth so easily beset us and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”

How needful it is that joy shines out ahead for us. This sustained Jesus, enabling Him to bear up under all that was required. To run with that same endurance, we too, Brethren and Sisters, must have that same joy clearly before us and therefore in our hearts and minds. It will give support when it seems we may never be able to *continue* the race, let alone win. It was this that was heard “... afar off in Jerusalem” as the Levites, the singers, Ezra, Nehemiah, and all the people united in thankful gladness that God had again established His city. “God made them rejoice with great joy.” (Neh. 12:43).

How kind and merciful was the Almighty toward His relatively few and feeble children gathered together in this work of re-establishing His city of peace. What help they were given as they worked on the walls, those bulwarks which protected them from their adversaries. We can compare this wall of defence to God's law. His word is a wall bringing the enmity between His people and the world. This wall also is to be a source of protection and comfort to those within but it is a source of irritation and hatred to those without, who will do all in their power to break it down. Should we not feel a great sense of gratitude for this divine shield? And can we not better enter the thinking of Nehemiah and that of all those in Jerusalem as they rejoiced in the provision granted amidst their enemies. Looking back over *their* experiences leading to this great joy, we can be further encouraged in our hope of sharing such joy. In Nehemiah 6 we have seen how the work of rebuilding the walls was finished. A natural reaction might be in such a case, to relax — to feel, "Well, that's done." Thus, we might let down our efforts. But can this ever be? No, constant help is necessary, constant reminders of our weaknesses are needed, and this help is ever available to us if we seek it. Our brethren in Jerusalem found it. We read in Neh. 8 how the law was read in the hearing of all. What a provision. We see that they:

"Read distinctly and gave the sense and caused them to understand the reading." (verse 8)

What was the people's reaction to this careful revealing of His word? Verse 9 tells us that ". . . all the people wept when they heard the words of the law." Why would they weep? Was it because there came with the reading a realization of how far from it they had fallen? But Nehemiah responded to their tears, saying:

"This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not — Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for *the joy of the Lord is your strength.*" (Neh. 8:9, 10)

Nehemiah's message was that the law was given in God's mercy and grace to lead His children back, to be a schoolmaster, bringing them to His Son, and thus it was to unfold the depth of His love, bringing to them joy and hope. That divine love is revealed to us in the instruction "send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared." Here was a care for those who were in need, who had none to provide for them, such as the fatherless and the widow, concerning whom God's law was explicit. Would not these for whom "nothing was prepared" feel a surge of joy and thankfulness when they received these portions? They would be enabled to perceive God's mercy in providing brethren and sisters to come alongside. Have we not,

ourselves, experienced that same tender concern and care, causing us to rejoice in it, indeed with gratitude, making the Lord's joy our strength? Remember *it* was the strength of our Elder Brother enabling Him to endure the cross. It is truly difficult to be glad, to feel joy in the midst of trouble, trial, and burdens. How toilsome this can make the race seem to us. Yet with the help of His word, we are given divine guidance, signposts pointing out the straight and narrow way that leads to His kingdom. And if we faithfully cleave to these we will be blessed in experiencing that joy of God's which is such *strength*. This word means a rock or fort — our wall to protect and guard. Let us then work and yield ourselves willingly to receive that joy from the Father. As we do our strength will surely grow. We have seen this through the experiences of our brethren of old in Jerusalem.

“Dwelling in Booths”

When the law was read distinctly and our brethren got the sense to it, (or clear understanding) they were moved in obedience once again to keep the feast of tabernacles. We are told:

“They found written in the law — that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month — all the congregation — made booths —: for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. *And there was very great gladness.*”

(Neh. 8:14-17)

Again here was joy as the provision of God was experienced. We remember the commands found in Lev. 23:42, 43, which no doubt had just been read distinctly in their ears by Ezra and Nehemiah.

“Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”

Once again after hundreds of years, the children of God dwelt in booths, under the protection and care of their Father. They would in this recognize the certainty of God's mercy and covering. This being the first time since the days of Joshua, is it not probable that those in Jerusalem may have rejoiced in God's deliverance exactly as their brethren did when they entered the land under Joshua, so remarkably shown God's deliverance.

Dwelling in these booths for seven days, the brethren's minds would be drawn ahead to hope with joy to the fulfilment of the promise in that feast of tabernacles:

“It shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.” (Zech. 14:16)

Reading these words, we remember that Zechariah was one of the prophets to the restored remnant in Jerusalem and they could very well have been spoken to those dwelling in these booths in the restored city. Can we see why it was such a time of gladness, why the joy of the Lord became their strength? Can it not, must it not be ours as we are sustained by the same words of the Spirit, the same hope of Israel, the same powerful help from our God?

Nehemiah has further shown us how, having heard the word of the Lord, our brethren realized their failure and became more determined to separate themselves from the people of the land, and then, with resolve and courage, put their seal to a covenant to serve their Father more faithfully. Here again is a sign that their *joy* in the Lord was a strength, a fortress. It may be to us also, if we firmly and lovingly turn our minds totally around from the strong influences of the flesh's wants.

Let us now strive to enter more fully into the minds and hearts of our brethren and sisters in Jerusalem so long ago, as the wall, their fort and strength, was dedicated or as the word means, devoted. The voices of the singers, the Levites, the priests joined with the trumpets and the instruments of music in this meaningful work, and thus, to His glory, “. . . the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off.” Brethren and Sisters, let us be aware; do we not hear it today as we look forward with glad hope to the time spoken of by our Lord God?

“The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”
(Isaiah 35:10)

J.A.DeF.



The Titles of the Psalms

“Speaking to yourselves in Psalms . . . making melody in your hearts to the Lord.” (Ephesians 5 v. 19)

PSALM 110

A Psalm of David.

HOW BEAUTIFULLY AND SIMPLY this Psalm explains the victory of Christ over all. Confounding to the wise and mighty of Christ’s day, the Psalm is at once intelligible to those who are “weak” and appear by comparison as “babes and sucklings”. The coming victory is so certain of accomplishment that the Psalm speaks of it as though it had already occurred, in the same way as only God Himself can speak of “things that be not as though they were.”

There is a reference, a very brief reference, showing how the victory will be achieved:—

“He shall drink of the brook in the way.” (Verse 7)

The brook or torrent as the original word conveys, is difficult of passage due to its unexpected and sudden spate of waters such as takes place after violent storms. Trial in adversity or tribulation is clearly indicated, so often unexpected and severe. Faithful ones will not shrink from drinking of the brook, in another figure the cup, and will with the strength of God make a crossing. Then trial with all its anguish and sorrow will be left behind, and joy and peace be found in the company of the Lord Himself and all His faithful followers.

This side of the brook the task of crossing seems difficult and at times threatening. The Psalm enables the mind to grasp the beauties and joys of the other side, so that in the case of Christ first, and later for all his brethren and sisters, the joy set before them enables them to endure the cross and despise the shame.

It is not without significance that the Hebrew for “brook” (*nachal*) is the parent of the English word Nile — the great river of Egypt and symbol of its power. In Egypt Israel had their trials and were delivered by a “mighty and strong arm”, the arm of the Lord. “Out of Egypt have I called my son”, says the prophet. Now this is partially fulfilled in being in Egypt but not of it. Soon the plagues of the prophet like unto Moses will be upon Egypt and all the Egyptians, that God’s people might be delivered and given their inheritance.

The Lord (Yahweh) said unto my Lord (Adon). (Verse 1)

The Truth is ever powerful: in the day of witnessing to the point of torment to its adversaries, and in the day of vengeance to the utter destruction of all its enemies. The present power of the Truth, speaks volumes in the ears of the faithful of the coming power to promote some to joy and incorruptibility and to destroy others so completely that the remembrance of them will be forgotten.

Look at the power of the Truth in the hands of Christ, although so "weak" that a smoking flax he would not quench, nor a bruised reed would he break.

The Sadducees baffled by His invincible answers about the Resurrection, the Pharisees venture a question, confident with their knowledge of the law for a better showing than their opponents, the Sadducees. Were they not in Moses' seat, wearing garments in which the borders were enlarged to show their "ribband of blue", their reverence for the law; and the "charms" or "phylacteries", were they not to show they had bound the law of God as frontlets before their eyes and on their hands? Surely such doctors of the law can answer any questions about it! Christ quotes the Psalm, "The Lord said to my Lord", and asks "If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" Not a word from these who had such an outward show of piety, and who were addressed by the people as Rabbi or Master, and also "Father". That simple question of the Lord's silenced the mighty adversary and exposed all his hypocrisy in a way which makes it feel a delight to be delivered from all the vanities of men, and be united to those who are the weak and despised. Yea, even the common people who groaned under the mischievous burdens imposed by their religious leaders, rejoiced and hear him gladly; but their fickle minds ultimately became a prey to the embittered Pharisees.

"The people shall be willing." (Verse 3)

"The people are willing-offerings in the day of thy might, in the majesties of holiness, from the womb of the dawn; to thee is the dew of youth." (Verse 3)

History takes great strides in this verse; epochs are measured by its tread. From the night where the dawn is concealed, to the time of Christ's might displayed in the majesty of holiness a great gulf is bridged; at least, so it seems to the minds which are finite. The solemn truth which this verse pronounces is that Christ's people in the day of his divine glory have been "willing", or as "free-will offerings" from the time before the dawn! Only hands which were "willing" were allowed to make the tabernacle where God was to dwell! Many

would gladly be “willing” in the day of Christ’s glory, and sad will be their disillusionment to find rejection instead of acceptance simply because in the time before the dawn they refused to present themselves a living sacrifice with a willing heart and mind. Only those who have embraced the Truth for its own sake, and whose appreciation of the love of God has constrained them to give their lives as a free-will offering will share the glory of the morn when they will appear beautiful and resplendent as “the dew of youth.”

“Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizadek.”

(Verse 4)

The Apostle in writing to the Hebrews to show particularly to those whose minds were naturally centred upon the Law of Moses, demonstrates how that the priesthood of Christ is not according to natural descent, that is, passing from father to son; nor was it to be limited to a period of years as in the Law terminating at the age of 50. In the words of the Apostle this priesthood was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life.” And so Christ having become a Great High Priest is to abide so continually. At once it will be seen that all subsequent claims to priesthood by the Papal and Protestant charlatans are false, and that these can do no more good for their dupes than those doctors of the law who delighted in a show of piety and to be had in reverence of the people who called them “Master” and “Father”. Christ is alive. He is a merciful and faithful High Priest ever ready to help those who follow Him, to cross the “brook ”of trial and distress that they may reach the glory.

“He shall wound (shatter) the head over the earth.” (Verse 6)

This tuneful Psalm which encompasses so much in the course of its brief melody shows at last Christ exalted and his enemies shattered, to use the English word nearer to the original. In the Authorised Version Christ is spoken of as wounding the “heads over many countries”; in the original it is the “head of the earth”. This language seems strongly reminiscent of the ultimate head of the earth seen in such profuse splendour in Rev. 17, the sixth head which had been wounded, but not to death. Surviving the seventh head it rises again which in true numerical sequence makes it the *eighth*, but in fact its whole character and antecedents show that it is the *sixth* and belongs to the complement of seven heads which are depicted by the Spirit as usurping the rightful place of Christ: for it has never been given to man to exercise such headship over his fellows.

This head of the earth is to be confounded, pulled down, shattered and destroyed. All the oppression which it has caused and condoned will be removed, and in its place the true head of man will appear, the Lord Jesus Christ, first the King of Righteousness (Melchi-Zedek) and then King of Peace (Salem).

To have the melody of this Psalm in the heart is to tread in the narrow way which leadeth to life, in company with the glorious and substantial verities of Yahweh; rejoicing in the deliverance from all the impressive emanations of the pious and the fulminations of the wicked; and looking for that blessed hope even the appearing of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

W.V.B.



Peace be unto you

“PEACE BE UNTO YOU.” With these words, Jesus greeted his disciples after being raised from the dead. We read of this incident in John 20:19:

“Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.”

These words seem significant since Jesus chose them to speak to His disciples, after He had arisen. Peace used here means to join, to be at one, prosperity. In essence Jesus was saying that He was joined to them again — in peace, at one, prospering, had overcome, just as God said He would.

“Peace be unto you.” How much we need this peace and to recognize what God’s purpose was in providing the Prince of Peace—the One through whom only there can be at-one-ment, through whom we can hope to overcome. In using these words, Jesus relayed the whole purpose of God. “Peace be with you” — as the Diaglott renders it. We are required to keep these words in mind in our daily living as we strive to overcome. Realizing this peace is always with us does help us, keeping in mind the fact that God’s provision through the Lord Jesus is always there.

When we look to this same incident in Luke, we find in chapter 24, prior to Jesus’ coming to His disciples, that two who knew of the

purpose of God, and had known that Jesus wasn't any longer in the grave, spoke within themselves:

“And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs.

And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

And it came to pass that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one with another, as ye walk, and are sad?

And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel; and, besides all this, today is the third day since these things were done.

Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, who were early at the sepulcher;

And when they found not his body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive.

And certain of those who were with us went to the sepulcher, and found it even as the women had said; but him they saw not.

Jesus responded in verses 25 and 26:

“Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

At this time, Jesus went back to the Law and Prophets, to all that foretold of Him. He sat down and ate with them prior to going the threescore furlongs to Jerusalem. It was after this time that Jesus talked to them regarding what had transpired, and He relayed to them who was in their midst.

“And as they thus spoke, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.” (verse 36)

The response of the disciples is perhaps an understandable one. Yet there was still a great need to find the peace, as they were terrified and affrighted—

“But they were terrified and affrighted and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet.

And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? (verses 37-41)

Here was Jesus in their midst, and the disciples responded with joy, and yet feared — were affrighted that Jesus was in their midst, yet they could not perceive at this time this peace which was among them, and the only means of being joined and made one, that the purpose of God should be accomplished.

After they ate, Jesus spoke to them further: (verses 44-49)

“And he said unto them, These are the words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day;

And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

And ye are witnesses of these things.

And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”

Here was Jesus — peace among them. He brought peace and opened their understanding that they might truly believe — to perceive the purpose of God, and what was to be required of them in order that they witness of Him.

This speaks to us of the peace we are to know as we struggle to be joined to God, and tells us that we are to have this peace in our hearts. Really, the whole work of Jesus was for peace — to break down the enmity in order to reconcile man with God, to make one and join and bring together in that one spirit, God's people. To many, this peace may be a mystery. But not to those who have come

to know and value it, as obviously His disciples did; we see Paul further speaks of this peace in Philippians 4:7:

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

Here are familiar words which can help us value the peace we are to have. The peace of God can only come from Him. It was only through God and His provision of the Lord Jesus and His overcoming that there could be again a body joined and made at one with Him. To consider that God would condescend to make known His Peace is truly beyond our understanding. As it says in the Psalms: “What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psalm 8:4)

We are told that through Jesus, the true peace, in our hearts and minds is kept. To keep means to protect, to mount a guard. This is what Jesus does for us if we recognize this. Paul continues this thought in Philippians 4:verses 8-9:

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Those things which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do, and the God of peace shall be with you.”

When we consider these things — that which is true, honest, pure, lovely (of love), of good report — we naturally think of the perfection of the things seen in the Lord Jesus, and recognize what Jesus has told us to do, to follow after Him. This is what we must do if the peace of God is to remain with us. Christ as a Mediator is that one whom God has provided, the one in whom the God of peace can make the Hope of Israel alive in us.

Paul tells us further in Ephesians 2:13-18:

“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby,

And came and preached peace to you who were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”

How remarkable was the work and purpose of God seen in the Lord Jesus, indeed making peace. Peace not only to the natural Jew but peace to all who through Christ have hope of being God’s children. Peace is important. How critical is the teaching of Jesus who shows us that peace and has made us walk in that peace. Turning to Matthew 18, along with the instructions how to maintain that peace, we read (verse 25):

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.”

A work of peace and continuing to keep at one — to value the oneness, to value the peace as Christ has revealed to us. Likewise, if the need goes beyond, as in verse 16:

“But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.”

For what purpose? Again, to make peace and to keep at one — to keep the House of God in peace. And further, verse 17:

“And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”

How significant these words are — words which God gives through the Spirit to keep at one, that we might maintain through the Lord Jesus the access by one spirit unto God. What great mercy and provision this is. Certainly this was Jesus’ mind as He spoke these words to His disciples, foretelling of what they were to do:

(John 20:20-23)

“And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Spirit; Whosoever’s sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever’s sins ye retain, they are retained.”

This speaks of the holiness required in the House of God. Paul speaks further in the 12th chapter of Hebrews in this regard, showing the necessity to keep the one spirit (verse 14):

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”

This puts before us the importance of peace — by which holiness can be maintained — that peace which can only bring us to see the Lord — only one Body and one way to attain — through the Prince of Peace. Again in Ephesians 4:1-3 we read:

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

We see that Jesus' words, “Peace be unto you” contain a great deal in endeavouring to do what God required of Him. He was making known to His disciples, and to us, our need to follow in that peace, because it is only through this peace we can hope to maintain that unity of spirit which can lead us to His Kingdom. The work of “Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” is one which we are faced with every day — to work together and to show as we can keep the peace within the House of God now, we can look forward when all that have known through all generations are gathered together — it truly will be a great gathering in which God will be glorified, and only through Christ can this gathering be possible. How significant, then was Jesus' coming with the words “Peace be unto you”, and we must keep it in mind in the test we face, both individually and ecclesially — if we can regard that peace, and Jesus' portrayal of it, we can truly follow Him and keep alive the hope through Jesus' resurrection.

M.C.S.



Tending the Lamps — “Let your Light Shine”

WE LOOK INTO THE DWELLING OF GOD His tabernacle. It is not dark, as might be supposed by outside examination, but is full of light — *sevenfold* light. Perfect! Complete! to supply all the needs of the house. How comes this wondrous light?

*“Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure olive oil beaten for the light to cause the lamps to burn continually
(Lev. 24, v. 2).*

Whilst God has provided the oil, His children must work to obtain it. Careful and constant effort would be necessary to beat out the essence of the olive. Similarly, careful and diligent application will be necessary to procure the Spirit from the Word. It is essential that the oil should be beaten *pure*, made free from anything which would cause the light to splutter. What care will be necessary that the Spirit-light brought from the Word is also free from any element which would tend to spoil it and detract from the clear shining of the lamp of truth.

Israel would have to be careful also that the pure oil was put into *pure* vessels. It would not be acceptable service to refine the oil and then contaminate it by careless handling. With this service of the house in mind, how powerful is the exhortation:

*“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”
(Matt. 5 v. 16)*

Being able to discuss first principles with a stranger, and quote passages in support, is not enough. Not only must the oil be pure, but also the vessel. Then the light will shine, perhaps more softly but how much more powerfully! And viewed collectively, as each member of the house carefully works to cause the light to shine, it will be like a lightstand, sending forth the brilliant light of Truth, a guide and a comfort to all within the house. As we watch inside the house the lightstand receives daily attention at the hands of the High Priest, and there is a noticeable fragrance as He is engaged in this work, for from the altar ascends clouds of incense. These are “the prayers of the saints”, when directed and set in order by our High Priest are fragrant, that is pleasing to the Father. Not one prayer is forgotten; not one appeal made in spirit and in truth is overlooked. Every need is known and the requisite trial, the timely chastisement or the deliverance is sought by the High Priest that every member of the House may be made a worthy member; and that every member may receive the guidance needed and the comfort of a loving Father.

W.V.B.

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

“And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth
blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into
blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.
And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the
name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and
in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said,
and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.”

(Joel 2:30-32)

THE ABOVE WORDS indicate a situation in the earth which
will be so deadly and hopeless that only in Jerusalem and the
remnant of the Lord God of Israel will there be a way of escape.

An advertisement in the National Press which appeared very
recently conveyed the following message:

Nuclear War Survival

If you've been seeking information on how you and your
family might survive a nuclear attack on Britain, then read on.
Protect & Survive Monthly is a magazine devoted to advice
on how to survive a nuclear, chemical or bacteriological
attack or accident. Each month, articles and reports written
by specialists in this subject give sensible advice on how to
protect you and your family should the unthinkable happen.
No politics; just authoritative information. Order from good
newsagents etc.

The word of God, however, is very explicit. “. . . Pillars of smoke.
The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood . . .
whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered . . . in
Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said. . . .” But
who amongst the nations and leaders of men would ascribe to this
view, which is indeed the veritable truth? The leader of Christendom
has said that Christ will not personally return, yet the deliverance
promised from Jerusalem is completely dependant upon this fact.
When Jesus ascended up on high was it not said:-

“. . . this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven,
shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into
heaven.” (Acts 1:11)

Jesus ascended from the Mount of Olives, at Jerusalem.

The simple Truth reveals that it is no use studying a Protect and
Survive programme. Man has reached the end of the road; he will
not be able to deliver himself.

A recent legal battle by a young woman with the British Tax authorities made interesting reading. As a self-employed person she objected that some of her taxes which she was paying to the Inland Revenue should be going towards military spending. So she withheld part of the amount, thereupon the tax officials reacted to this by saying that they could not enter into a "moral argument" and threatened action. The young lady, however, after three months of resistance, won her case. The Inland Revenue decided to use its discretionary powers to accept two separate cheques as payment for one income tax demand. Forty per cent of her commitment thereupon went to the Ministry for Overseas Development. It was a small voice of disapproval, in one sense, but the case revealed how much revenue is being channelled into evil and ferocious tools. She concluded her exercise of protest by saying:

"I am not questioning the idea of taxation, but you cannot opt out of nuclear war, so this is my way of saying 'stop it now before it is all too late.' It seems ludicrous to be a member of a group working for peace (The Committee for Nuclear Disarmament) while paying for weapons at the same time. Of course, my money won't make any difference but if enough people took advantage of this discretionary right within the law it could have enormous consequences."

A Quaker, who has been involved in this issue said that a number of the members of Parliament supported the contention, and he summarised his own view in the following terms:

"I think that the time has come when the military have reached the end of their road. They have only arms a maniac would use and we have to find another way to peace."

Unfortunately, for such a point of view, the military do not think they have reached the end of the road, and are very critical about small reductions in arms expenditure as a result of Britain's economic recession.

In a mad mood, the war lords have recently practiced the NATO Exercise Wintex, so that procedures of transition from peace to war might be studied. NATO Ministers, including Prime Ministers took a close interest in it, finding time to play-act their roles in some cases, instead of the senior officials designated to enact on behalf of them. Involved were the staffs concerned with deploying troops, together with many civil as well as military agencies, and Government departments. So the net is prepared to catch up the populace, to feed them to the fire in pursuit of a victory, which in nuclear war no side can achieve.

How good and merciful is the divine message:

“... in Jerusalem shall be deliverance . . . and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.”

There is considerable meaning and instruction in the phrase “and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.” The indication is that deliverance will not be through many. The teeming millions of the earth will not effect it. The great religions will not bring it to pass.

That there is a need for deliverance is obvious; the undeniable word of God says there is this need: and the situation in the nations of the present time corroborates it.

How aptly the prophecy describes the danger, “blood and fire and *pillars of smoke*.” As the nuclear device explodes into a frightening pillar reaching up into the heavens the sun is darkened, and beneath the smoke is a boiling chaos of fire.

A local vicar has called upon his parishioners to join in a major protest against the British Government’s nuclear arms policy. No doubt to the disapproval of the British religious establishment, which is so bound up with the policies of State. The following is an extract from what he had to say:

“Campaigning is not only a matter of waving banners. It is about influencing ordinary people so that, at the next election, we return a government that is committed to nuclear disarmament.

The present policy of spending money on the new Trident weapons system is empty and hopeless.

Our country’s defence policy is based on the theory that if some enemy decides to wipe out our population with nuclear weapons, we will do exactly the same.

I now believe that our country should adopt a new policy in the light of the appalling effects of nuclear war. That policy is to declare that we will never use them, under any circumstances, and that we will disarm completely our nuclear weapons.

Abandonment of current policy makes sense economically because the arms race is nothing more than spending money like water to ensure an advantage that can never be tested without total destruction.

The money squandered could be spent on improving the declining condition of our health service or our education service.

When I think of the money that has been spent on all our now obsolete weapons, that were never needed, it nauseates me. Desperate politicians on either side, will take the risk and use nuclear weapons to gain advantage.

Now is the time to do something about it. We are being haunted. The ghost of our dead children and our ruined cities and polluted environment and our poisoned food and rivers accuses in advance. Let us dedicate ourselves to opposing it."

The vicar obviously has not taken the sure word of prophecy into consideration. No protest group will achieve an escape from the dilemma. There is only one way. "In mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said."

The new United States Administration has called for a huge rise in defence outlay.

The Russian scientists, working furiously, have in the meantime developed a hunter-killer satellite, which could eliminate United States satellites, when so required, enabling Russia to gain a little advantage in timing, when the buttons are pressed. The elimination of U.S. satellites would deprive the United States of their early warning reconnaissance ability.

On the other hand there are fresh endeavours in the United States to seek for a change of the decision not to manufacture the radiation, high yield, neutron bomb, which burns up flesh without affecting buildings or equipment.

There is also much work being put into the laser beam device, which in the view of senior U.S.A. Scientists, could determine the outcome of a world conflict in the middle to late 1980's! One senior official has commented, "We can now think about shooting down the other fellow's missiles without using nuclear warheads." Lasers have already been tested from the ground against flying targets, and have shot down aircraft with their high energy beam. Laser weapons planned to be used on aircraft and in space may also be developed for use by soldiers in ground warfare.

But the Russians have also been busy in this scientific field, and have been successful in their testing of a neutron beam weapon at Semipalatinsk, where large quantities of gaseous hydrogen, with traces of tritium was detected in the sky by the U.S. early-warning satellites.

Even India is catching up in certain directions, having her own satellite in orbit, and planning to launch more and larger ones from their bustling space site near Madras, to the intense surprise of Western technological nations. They plan to orbit at 22,300 miles above the equator and also into polar regions.

All these things reveal the veracity of the sure word of prophecy "wonders in the heavens and in the earth". But only "in the remnant whom the Lord shall call", will there be deliverance.

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.

Although as this is written there is snow on the ground, the promise of Spring with its revival of life is near.

It makes us long for the time of rebirth when Jesus returns to bring peace and justice to this earth.

We are grateful for letters from our brethren and sisters helping us to feel closer to our loved ones across the sea, helping too to comfort in this time of testing.

The work with one seeking the only way of salvation continues with help granted in difficulties which continually arise to test and yet encourage.

J.A.DeF.

“PENTRIPP”, Black Rock, Portmadoc

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

We were glad to have the company of Sis. Lois Bouchet and Sis. Eunice Francis at the weekend of March 8th. In spite of cold and stormy weather we have been grateful that we have been allowed to deal with all needs that have come along.

In studying the Revelation we feel strengthened as we look forward to its fulfilment.

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.

Life in the truth shows how generation after generation men rise up to “draw away disciples after them”. What is the explanation for this? The examination of where this has occurred has revealed that it has been due to pride. The number of times this has happened is very numerous, a proof to those who have ears to hear of how frail is our nature. If it could only be remembered by us all that “correction is grievous to him that turneth out of the way”, then we should receive much help to keep our nature under control.

Departure from the Truth and its principles as stated in the foregoing has required first the admonition and later due to refusal to heed, withdrawal from Sister Della Glenn and Sister Hazel Iago.

W.V.B.