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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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At the Table of the Lord

“The place which the Lord shall choose”

THROUGH THE POWER OF GOD’S WORD, we are able to listen to Moses as he spoke to his brethren just before they were to enter the land. We are reading the book of Deuteronomy, which name we find means, a repeating of the law. Why was it necessary to review the law to Israel and what too was it to do for them, also what can it do for us today as we are privileged to read it? If we can enter into the circumstances as Moses spoke these words, may we not find special help in our determination to keep God’s word? The first few verses of Deuteronomy reveal the time and conditions.

“These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side of Jordan in the wilderness —” Ch. 1, v. 1.

Also:

“— it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the Lord had given him in commandment unto them:” Verse 3.

The forty years of wandering were almost at an end, soon the promised entrance of the land would be accomplished. At this time Moses reminded them of their failure at Kadesh-Barnea to go up into the land as God had required. Due to unbelief, the journey from Sinai to their entrance into the land, which could have been accomplished in a few days, took forty long, laborious years of wandering.

The Father knew that in forty years much could be forgotten: the wonder, the fear of God’s speaking to them, the miracle of God’s pillars of cloud and fire to lead them, all these could easily be forgotten the wonder, the fear of God’s speaking to them, the miracle of God’s pillars of cloud and fire to lead them, all these could easily be forgotten or be put to the back of their minds in that long time. So the Almighty commanded Moses to speak before they went into the land in order to remind Israel. Things in their future would very soon prove to be very different. In the land of Caanan, there would no longer be a dwelling in tents, the manna would also cease, the pillar of cloud and fire would no longer go before them by day and night, the tabernacle would no longer be in the midst of the camp to speak of His presence, the congregation would be scattered throughout the land in their inheritances chosen by lot, no longer to be bound

together as the camp of Israel, journeying or stopping as a unit when the cloud or the fire so indicated. It was to be a different life, different circumstances, yet God was yet their Father, would continue to dwell in their midst, would lead them, and would be sure to bless them if they kept their word to Him to obey.

Can we not see why Moses was commanded to speak these words we are considering in Deuteronomy? Do we see why the law needed to be repeated, given a different application in order to be the best help to our brethren? As they camped on the borders of the land, near the end of the fortieth year, this special help was given in order to make them prepared for what was ahead. Too, Moses realized that he must soon die, for he was not allowed to go into the land because of his failure to do what sanctified God at the rock. In love for his brethren, his desire was to give all the help he could, to warn, to remind, to encourage, to bless them before he was taken away.

With all this in mind, we can find particular guidance in Moses' words as we strive to be obedient, to serve God with our whole hearts, looking for the inheritance promised and which seems so near as we see world events falling into their appointed courses.

“To know what was in their heart”

It has been observed how Moses first reminded his brethren of all that God had done for them and how they had failed to obey Him at Kadesh-Barnea; yet He had provided, even though there was this failure to believe in Him. In Deuteronomy 8 Moses spoke:

“— thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to *humble* thee, and to *prove* thee, to *know what was in thine heart*, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.” Verse 2.

God desired to humble each one, to bring low, to cause them to *submit self* as the word means, and in addition to test them, to see what was their mind and determination, and to whom their heart was bound. It is needful for all of us to submit our “self” if we are to obey God, to please Him by following after His Son. The Father tests all His children to see whether this is being accomplished — or whether, under trial, the flesh proves itself to be still dominant, needing more affliction, more chastening to subdue it. Moses continued:

“He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna — that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord.” Verse 3.

Is this our conviction? Bread alone is not enough for us to be strong spiritually, we must feed upon the word of God as did Jesus in the wilderness when He was an hungered and was so tempted. We may say, "Yes, I know this." but when the test comes what does come first — the needs or wants of our flesh, or the word of God? This is our time of probation, of proving, Brethren and Sisters; will that word be sufficient for us? Will we welcome it as His provision and not murmur, recognizing that it is given of God for our perfect help? Going on now, Moses said:

"Thou shalt also consider in thine heart that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee."
Verse 5.

How sore was their chastening, or teaching, as the word means. But done in perfect love it was, by a perfect Father. Yet this discipline caused Israel to murmur and complain. How difficult the human mind finds it to submit, to accept the loving correction of our God. Yes — we are to "consider in thine heart", to let this important work of our Father, this chastening go into our hearts, perceiving His love and searching for what is being shown to us. To what end? Moses tells us:

"Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him." Verse 6.

Our need is clear. How can we accomplish it? Let us remember, submit self, recognize God's hand in chastening, and His purpose, then fear and obey. Moses did indeed help his brethren to look back, to consider in their heart all that the Lord had done in those forty years of testing and of chastening.

"There ye shall — rejoice"

Now Moses looked forward to the entry of his people into the land. He sought to help them please God. He warned in Deuteronomy against the idols, the groves, and the pillars they would find in the land, and told them to utterly destroy them. He unstructed them instead:

"But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose — to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shall come and thither ye shall bring your — offerings — and there ye shall eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall *rejoice* in all that ye put your hand unto— where the Lord thy God hath blessed thee." Deut. 12:5-7.

This rejoicing before the Lord was spoken of by Moses often:

“Ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God —” Verse 12.

“— and thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God —”

Verse 18.

A part of true and acceptable obedience is the quality of being able to sincerely rejoice as God’s presence is experienced and comprehended. Are we not also to do this, Brethren and Sisters? to be glad and brighten up because of all our Father continually does for us? Help can be found throughout God’s word. The law given in Leviticus, speaking of the Feast of Tabernacles when Israel was to dwell in booths (covered by God’s provision) instructed:

“— ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God — Ye shall dwell in booths seven days.” Ch. 23:40, 42.

Would not this yearly gathering bring forth rejoicing before the Lord? How impressive the change, as they left behind their everyday duties and labors, shared the company of others who loved God, built the booths together, and dwelt therein — all aware of God’s merciful provision. They were to dwell under His covering and this would evoke in the faithful true delight to be so blessed and privileged, and more, to realize they had from Him, a covering, a hope, and an escape. We read also of the feast of weeks which Israel was to keep earlier in the year.

“Thou shalt keep the feast of weeks — with a tribute of a freewill offering of thy hand,— according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee:” Verse 10.

How great indeed is His bounty, His blessing. Did Israel, and can we respond to it in a way which pleases Him and gratefully acknowledges His mercy? Verse 11 tells us:

“Thou shalt rejoice before the Lord — in the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to place his name there.”

Again — be glad — find joy — respond to all that our Father has granted, look forward to all that He has promised to His privileged and loved people. Let us remember, joy is not for just special occasions, such as the feasts in Israel, but as Jesus said to His disciples when they returned from preaching the word of God. They came to Him:

“— with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject to us through thy name.” Luke 10:17.

Jesus' reply was:

“— in this rejoice not — but rather rejoice, *because your names are written in heaven*” Verse 20.

Shall we stop and think about this for a moment. What an invaluable blessing to have our names written in the abode of God, and thereby to have the hope of salvation because we are enabled to approach unto our Father through the Lord Jesus, His Son. Now Luke continues:

“In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father,— that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes —” Verse 21.

He *greatly joyed* at this infinite wisdom and great mercy of God, which showed His purpose and granted His help to those who in the eyes of the world appeared as only “babes”, unlearned and humble. These were the ones whom Jesus exhorted to “rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” Are we able, Brethren and Sisters, to perceive sufficiently the wonder and do we rejoice in this hope? In all the turmoil, hustle, and pressure of every day life, do we at times stop to consider how He is working with us and then truly feel that joy that He has so shaped our lives and futures? It is not easy nor natural to have that joy always within but how pleasing to God and how upbuilding to ourselves.

“Think it not strange”

There are times in the lives of each one of us, we may feel under a heavy load, enduring sore trial, approaching discouragement and perhaps doubt. We find it hard to rejoice. Peter shows us how we can put this situation in its right perspective.

“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.” I Peter 4:12.

Our rejoicing before the Lord may be a measure of the growth of our trust in Him. Do we *believe* — in His Word, His covenant, His promise of a place with His own Son when He comes? When we consider the inexpressible joy to be experienced as a part of His

Bride, the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, we remember the words of Isaiah:

“Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her, rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her.”
Ch. 66:10.

And the prophet continues to show us the reason for such joy:

“For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river — and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And when ye see this, your heart shall flourish like an herb: And the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies.” Verses 12–14.

Jerusalem is where God will place His name forever, where His servants will indeed rejoice before their Lord. This is what lies before us, is it not, if only we can hold fast to our faith and courage.

As we are permitted to grow in discernment of God’s compassion and love toward His children in the giving of His law and also in the repeating of it as He did to Israel, we grow also in seeing our great need. So let us each one, look ahead with renewed hope to the promise of eternal peace and rejoicing in the place where He has promised to place His name forever.

J. A. DeFries



The Titles of the Psalms

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

PSALM 126.

A Song of Degrees (or going up to Zion).

“When Yahweh turned again the captivity of Zion.” (V. 1).

The exultant note of this Song is calculated to raise the heart above all present sadness. The power of Yahweh on behalf of His people in the past is made to appear very real enabling Zion’s pilgrims to look forward with keen anticipation to its grand and final manifestation. The daughters of Zion have had long and bitter experience of captivity; but the Song contains the promise of Yahweh’s liberating hand.

Captivity is subjection to an alien power seen on a most extensive scale when Israel were in Egypt. The circumstances which led to Israel’s captivity were not accidental: they were over-ruled so that in the promised deliverance there might be abundant and indisputable testimony to the power and love of Israel’s God.

“Nevertheless he saved them for his name’s sake, *that he might make his mighty power to be known.*

He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths as through the wilderness.

And he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the enemy.

And the waters covered their enemies; there was not one of them left.

Then believed they his words, they sang his praise.” (*Ps. 106, vs. 8/12*).

Never in the history of nations has there been such a remarkable event. Israel were totally unarmed and defenceless. Yet everyone was saved. Egypt was equipped with all the most powerful weapons of the time, but all were destroyed. No testimony could ever be more eloquent or complete to show that Yahweh can “turn the captivity” of His people. Through the kindness of the Almighty the power of this knowledge was to be preserved amongst His children, and so the Passover was instituted as a memorial feast. To this day, the central feature of the Feast is remembered every first day.

But how quickly in the celebrating of all the ordinances can the keeping of the form outlive the sincere acknowledgment of the power. The brethren and sisters of Moses had scarcely left the scene of their miraculous deliverance before their belief in the power of God failed.

“They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel.”
(Ps. 106, v. 13).

How frail is the quality of faith reposed in most human breasts.

Moses and a few like him believed in the power of God, when the majority fell in unbelief.

David was such a one as Moses. His Songs breathe of implicit faith in God’s power to deliver from all captivity. These Songs are the songs of all the sons of Zion who look upon the delivering power of God in the past, and by this means are fortified in faith to face the future.

David recalls in this Song with glowing faith Yahweh’s turning of Zion’s captivity in past times. The reference seems to be to the outstanding liberation from the hard bondage of Egypt. He alludes to the fear which this caused Israel’s enemies to feel, and their acknowledgment that:—

“The Lord hath done great things for them.” (V. 2).

Joyfully and with a fulness of faith he can say —

“The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad.”
(V. 3).

“As the streams in the South.” (V. 4).

The mighty movement of the nation of God from Egypt through the wilderness up into the land until Zion was taken in the time of David is a powerfully descriptive type of the work of God in all generations. The necessary separation as from Egypt is admirably represented; trial during privation is graphically seen in the wilderness; and finally Zion itself is reached. Zion’s sons are well acquainted with each of these steps but the last, for this, the arrival in Zion they wait in faith for their Captain who is to lead them there.

The climax to this work of Yahweh is superbly illustrated in Israel’s journeying from the wilderness into the land under Joshua. The re-enactment of this historical march is soon to take place with

another Joshua (Jesus) as the leader. It is a long time now since such a "stream appeareth in the south." For centuries it seems as though the eagerly awaited rains have been delayed, and so the streams which give joy to man and beast have remained dry. But as surely as these would re-appear at the appropriate season in time past, so the "streams in the south" of Yahweh's liberated ones will be seen. What a mighty throng there will be coming up from the wilderness. Here and there will be groups of brethren and sisters like streams; and all joined together will appear as a great river.

"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." (*Ps.* 46, v. 4).

This is the moment for which brethren and sisters wait. Then the journey will be nearly ended. Zion will be within sight. As in the days of Joshua, the power of their Captain will strike terror in the heart of the enemy; and soon all nations will bow down before Him. First one nation and then another will discover the beauty of holiness and acknowledge the glory of Zion's King and His companions.

Spontaneously they will exclaim:—

"The Lord hath done great things for them." (*V.* 2).

And as the thought is expressed by one nation after another the whole world will reverberate with the praise of Yah.

Beautiful and devout will be the response of His saints, the long foretold creation of His power:—

"The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad."
(*V.* 3).

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." (*V.* 5).

To experience the fulness of the joy of liberation there must be captivity; even if not in the sense Israel were slaves in Egypt, there must be some kind of subjection to an alien power. Job, although not a captive in the ordinary sense, was the victim of the hatred and cruelty of the adversary. Job's adversaries claimed to be his friends, but they were without doubt his Satan or adversary. The ultimate deliverance of Job from the power of the adversary, his vindication and their condemnation, are beautifully significant events.

“And the Lord *turned the captivity* of Job . . . also the Lord added all that had been to Job unto the double.” (Job 42, v. 10 margin).

The present day counterpart is often seen in those of Satan’s synagogue protesting friendship for the brethren, at the same time as they defame them and try to undermine their work. Job found it a hard trial, as the brethren do to-day. It calls for the rare quality of patience or submission to the divine will. Those who endure like Job, continuing to “bear the precious seed” though with weeping, will presently come out of their great tribulation to appear “before the throne of God.” Then —

“The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” (Rev. 7, v. 17).

W.V.B.

“I am Thy Salvation”

WE KNOW THAT OUR RESPONSE to the hand of God on us is crucial to our continuing life and well-being in the Truth. God requires obedience and submission to His Word and, in return, provides the assurance of His overruling care. Our sensitivity to our relationship with God is very important, since we must allow our spirits to be guided in response to the hand of God working with us.

How well this relationship is revealed in David's response to God's hand working with him. As we look to David's example, we are reminded to consider the care needed if God is to work likewise with us. As we look at Psalm 35, we find David seeking God's deliverance:

“Plead my cause, O Lord, with those who strive with me; fight against those who fight against me.

Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help. Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against those who persecute me. Say unto my soul I am thy salvation.”

(verses 1-3)

This pleading by David was important. He obviously sought God's help against those who rose up against him — his enemies. He wanted God foremost in his mind to help save his soul and to be a power in his life, perceiving that God was his salvation. He approached to God seeking deliverance and in so doing tells us in verses 27-28:

“Let them shout for joy, and be glad, who favor my righteous cause. Yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, who hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.”

David reminds us here that as he looked for God's help and deliverance, he would magnify God.

We see this when we go to Psalm 18. David remembered these words which he spoke here, his desire to give praise as he was strengthened, because he would know deliverance from his enemies. The Title of this Psalm:

“To the One who overcomes. A Psalm of David, the servant of the Lord, who spake unto the Lord these words of this song in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul:

This title depicts that David sought to give praise to God as he recognized deliverance, and as he was delivered from Saul and all his enemies. Not that there aren't other enemies; but his response to God was the feeling that God had delivered and helped, and would be there in the continuing trials of his life. David's words are significant here in verses 1-2:

“I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.”

All those things which David speaks of in Psalm 35, David speaks of as well here. God was his strength, and he attributes that strength only to God who does know and who delivers those who are His servants.

God looks for in a servant a response which is in accordance with how He works with him. David responded here, telling us in verses 3-6:

“I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from mine enemies. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the floods of ungodly men made me afraid. The sorrows of hell compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me. In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears.”

David's spirit clearly revealed that if he called on God, who is worthy to be praised, that he knew he could be saved from his enemies. David pleaded that he might be saved, giving the response that God looked for, which was, looking to God for the way out around his trouble. We remember many of the circumstances David met in his relationship with Saul. It would have been easy to take the advantage over Saul. Yet, was not God there to touch David's spirit to help him put down his flesh and to persevere under the circumstances which God had provided? David responded and this was pleasing to God. David obviously valued God's help and care.

We go to Luke 20 and find summarized what God looks for:

“And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” (verses 17-18).

This has much to do with response. Response can only come from a sensitive spirit. David we know was one who was a man after God's own heart. Why? Because he sought the salvation that could only come from God. He sought the rock, knowing he would fall and be broken, and feared for the rock falling on him. Psalm 18:2 reveals David's mind in this regard:

"The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."

How helped David was, how much his perception was allowed to be strengthened, and how much his continuing responses were pleasurable to God.

"He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me. They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the Lord was my stay. He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me."

This, if it were the flesh speaking, wouldn't be delightful to God; but it is the spirit. His enemies were too strong for him. His desire was to seek the Rock, in comparison to rising up and fighting against the Rock, which is the natural tendency of the flesh. "... He delighted in me".

Going on to verses 20-22 we read:

"The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his judgments were before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me."

David's dependence on God was always before him. He could say that the Lord rewarded him according to his righteousness; the righteousness which David saw in putting down the flesh — seeing the deliverance that was his, moving in the way God desired and shows how we too must move. David's understanding is told in verses 26-28 of Psalm 18:

"With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward. For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks. For thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness."

How much is revealed in these words particularly of how God works with those who are His, and those who are not. God will be for His people — those who recognize the enemy — the flesh. As there is a recognition of this, there can be the right response. “God will enlighten my darkness”. We must first recognize “our darkness”, before we can seek after the Light. How much David sought that light and how much he must have agonized as revealed in Psalm 35 — “Plead my cause . . .” looking for the help, and knowing God to be the only source of help.

“And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long”. (verse 28)

“All the day long” reveals how much David looked to God, sought His help, and how much his spirit magnified God — made God large in his living — using the resources in his life to guide and direct his spirit.

When we compare ourselves with David as we look for the help we see from God, and are granted that help, do we respond, seeking to give praise to God — to show God’s righteousness — that God is large in our hearts, and we are seeking to serve Him as righteous servants? Can we be touched with the spirit as expressed in verse 27 of Psalm 35?:

“Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.”

We know the prosperity of the True Servant — the Lord Jesus Christ. As we recognize Jesus’ victory, can the desire of our spirits be as David’s to shout for joy as we desire the favour of God? What does it require? A response which gives recognition and praise to God, but first recognizes the darkness and seeks deliverance from it.

M.C.S.



Appreciation

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY brings to attention the choice placed before the people of God. To hearken diligently to God ensures God's promised blessing and the following instruction is worthy of note:

“And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.”

Deut. 28:14

The people of God, having then become the people of God; are made responsible if they turn aside. The choice is theirs, but the turning aside will not bring any real good however temporarily attractive the turning aside might seem to be, for in the ultimate sense the curse; the evil; will overtake! And so again it is recorded:

“And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.

Because thou servest not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things.”

Deut. 28:46-47

It is a fact that we do not appreciate in the fullest sense the abundance which God has given. God has sent forth provision to make us joyful; He has given from His store to make us glad. His blessings are more than we can number, yet we do forget. However we can be helped to remember all the goodness of His provision, and as we can be helped to remember all the goodness of His provision, and as we appreciate His bounty we will be brought nearer to Him.

It is however a human failure, a human weakness, that when we are going to lose something we have taken for granted, it is at that point we appreciate it all the more.

Israel were so abundantly blessed that they allowed themselves to become so accustomed to receiving, that they forgot the giver of their blessings. But as the instruction of Deuteronomy shows, what God has given He can also take away. Having freely given His Truth, for example, He can also take that blessing from us. How do we ensure then, that we are being allowed to keep it in possession? How do we help ourselves to continue in it? Surely by appreciating it, and rejoicing in it.

This appreciation then is our strength and will be to our welfare. The Song of the truth, has something to say on this theme.

“O that thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! when I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised.” Songs. 8:1.

Here indeed is appreciation of the Truth. A brother is usually very close; and is a support if he is appreciated. This is in the natural run of things. The beloved, the bride, shows her appreciation for Christ the elder brother and friend in these words. He is The Brother and spouse. The yearning appreciation of Him, is seen in the wanting of Him in this way. We note the phrase, “O that thou wert ‘as’ my brother” and not “O that thou were my brother”. Those who yearn for His help will not be unsatisfied. He will be as a brother. Did He not say:

“Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

The following words are also worth noting:

“His left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.” Songs 8:3.

Yes, the head supported and the heart embraced as the mind and the emotion is stirred. Appreciation of what is given in Christ will bring His appreciation of our appreciation and his consequent support to mind and heart.

But appreciation comes by a development of the understanding and comprehension of what is being given. Hence the words that follow:

“I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, until he please.” Songs 8:4

Until he please or until ‘it’ please (Him). It is the studied contemplation of Christ, just like the young woman who studies her young man, which will bring about that developing love and appreciation which will ultimately abound and continue in the song of the truth for ever. It cannot be suddenly stirred up, not in the deep, sublime and lasting sense. It develops as there is a getting to know Him. So the Song of the Truth takes hold of what is a powerful working in the natural event of the loving aspect of human life, of men and women who work at getting to know each other in a hope that they may achieve a lasting bond all the days of their lives.

As we consider the natural aspect we know this song of the Truth is indeed true. To come to the new Testament we see an example of appreciation:

“And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.” (Mark 16:1-2)

It is not an easy task to anoint a dead body. The womens' desire to do this shows their love, their dedication, their appreciation. The going so early, at the first opportunity, after the passing of the sabbath also reveals a zealous effort. This appreciation God appreciated. Hence:

“And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?
And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

And he said unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.” Mark 16:3-7.

Their appreciation and love Christ also certainly appreciated. Hence:

“Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.” Mark 16: 9-10.

We are also caused again to think of the words of Jesus:

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Matt. 28:19-10.

He is there always, even to these last days, for that is His promise, It is a promise to those, who, however few, are not unremembered, like those few disciples at the time of His resurrection, He is with those who appreciate the blessing of what has been given by God in Him.

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

“Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears. Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and shew us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth; Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord. . . .” Isaiah 43:8-10.

THOUGH ISRAEL IS BUT A SMALL NATION, the world's attention is continually being focused upon that land.

At the time of writing the two great religious leaders in Israel are joining in concerted action to bring about major changes through endeavours to influence the ruling minority government, which depends upon coalition with the religious parties for its majority in Israel's parliament.

The head of the Ashkenazi Jews from Russia, America and Europe has linked himself with the head of the Sephardic Jews from Arab lands, and has stated the new religious position in the following terms:

“We are at the turning point. Israel must now decide whether it will respect the laws of Moses or not, whether it will behave according to the morality of the prophets or not. This is the first big battle in the survival of our religion.

Our religion was the cement which held the Jews together throughout the centuries of dispersal. Today when we have re-established the Jewish kingdom in Israel we cannot on the one hand wave the Bible as the greatest evidence that the Holy Land belongs to us, and on the other hand violate the laws of Moses.

We do not want to interfere with anyone's privacy, but publicly we want every one to know that this is a biblical State.”

Events in Israel, that have brought power to the Rabbis through political coalition, enabling them to threaten to bring the government down unless it comes to terms with certain religious requirements such as the stopping of public transport on the Sabbath including the national air-line; and the closing of factories and businesses on that day; undoubtedly bring to the fore, that pronouncement through Isaiah the prophet all those years ago:—

“Let all the nations be gathered together . . . let them hear, and say, It is truth. Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord . . .”

But the nations do not realise the significance of Israel, though continually the great powers are being involved in plans for, and manoeuvres in the region of the Middle East. The greatest change that has ever happened to mankind will commence in Israel, and as a witness to it the religious binding which holds the Jews together must inevitably continue, even though it can be said that it is a "blind people that have eyes and (a) deaf that have ears." The mosaic binding of the Jews is in a mechanical religious sense, but nevertheless it is the greatest sign of the personal return of Christ that exists in the world of the present time.

The build up of events preparatory to His coming is continually being seen. The recent assassination of the President and the Prime Minister of Iran speaks of the growing threat to the fundamentalist Islamic regime of that country. Two months prior to this devastating act against the government the leader of the ruling Islamic Republican party was amongst seventy people who were killed by a bomb at the party headquarters. The aged Ayatollah, leader of Iran, had reacted to that event by having seven hundred political opponents executed. But the opposition is not quelled by such ruthless action. A former political leader of that troubled country, who is now in exile, has said that the Ayatollah's regime will collapse if five of his key men are killed. At the time of writing three of these have passed into oblivion. The Ayatollah, seventy nine years of age, has not long to go; and neighbouring Russia with prolific power is awaiting such an event.

Another incident, though superficially trivial, has considerable import. American pilots, on exercises with vessels of the United States Sixth Fleet in the Gulf of Sidra off the coast of Libya noticed two Soviet-built SU 22 jets of the Libyan Air Force preparing to attack them. As the Libyan pilots fired, the American "Tomcats" responded with Sidewinder missiles, which proved the U.S. superiority for the Libyan aircraft were immediately destroyed.

Libya's intense hostility to western nations has been by no means diminished by this incident. Its pro-Russian stance is bound to cause American planners to keep a considerable force in that part of the Mediterranean Sea, where there are fifty American ships including two large aircraft carriers, also nuclear submarines with nuclear missiles, two hundred aircraft, and twenty-five thousand servicemen. American official comment on the incident of the Libyan attack has been seen in the stern announcement that, "any future attack against United States forces operating in international waters and air space will also be resisted by force if necessary."

Libya, is with Russia, and it is only a matter of time before Persia also joins the Northern confederacy. But the nations do not understand that in all these events there is a purpose, and the witness to

such a purpose is the nation of Israel, so different in some aspects to any other nation. The existence of Israel is the greatest sign of all, of a coming change throughout all the earth, as foretold, by Isaiah who said:—

“I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King; Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters;
Which bringeth forth the chariot and the horse, the army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise; they are extinct, they are quenched as tow.” (Isaiah 43:15–17)

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.

In response to urgent prayer, guidance has been given as well as encouragement in the work of His house here.

As the violence, crime, strikes, uncertainty and perplexity in the world increase daily, we can find assurance in the knowledge that these circumstances were foretold by Jesus as necessary signs in the earth, heralding His return. May we find help and strength to endure until He comes in the hope of approval at His judgment seat.

The Sunday School outing was held on August 15th with games and enjoyment for young and old. We are grateful for these opportunities to enjoy companionship and the wonders of His creation.

J.A.DeF.

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.

It is encouraging to find that one who is outside can be helped to discover the One Body with the hope of salvation which this provides. In a recent letter received this is seen to be the case:—

“Visiting a home of a friend I noticed some magazines and a chart showing the divisions necessary for the preservation of the truth I am a member of the Dawn Fellowship. I am interested in your booklet — ‘The History of the truth in the Latter Days.’ I feel that it might have the reasons for the various divisions put down in an easily read and understood manner. Would you kindly send me a copy please?”

Needless to say this will be done and any further help which may be required will be gladly given.

W.V.B.