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The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

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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

“Because Ye believed Me not, to sanctify Me . . . ”

We have been journeying with our brethren of Israel through the wilderness, a desolate place to which God separated His people as He led them toward their promised inheritance. His presence was with them in a very tangible way — in the pillar of cloud by day and the fire by night. How wonderful to be able to look up, see this and to know with certainty that the Almighty was there. To further assure His children, God spoke to them through His prophet. How many times have we read the words. “And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, speak unto the children of Israel — ”? They were instructed, directed, guided, chastened by their Father as He watched over them in all their journeying. What a blessed position for His people. None others had the covering of the God of Israel; no other people were led by the cloud and fire, to no others did God speak, and only in the midst of His Israel did He reveal Himself. These were His children — called out, saved from death by the blood of a lamb, baptized in the cloud and in the Red Sea.

This was His ecclesia in the wilderness of which, many years later, Stephen spoke as he gave answer to the high priests’ question, “Are these things so?” He said:

“This is that Moses — that was in the church (ecclesia) in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sina. and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:” Acts 7:37, 38

What God spake through Moses were “lively oracles”, living words — the word which brought life to our brethren and sisters in their hard wilderness way. Yet we know that His children were not content; they murmured, complained, and rebelled against God, against Moses and Aaron and longed to return to Egypt where they had experienced only toil and oppression. How discouraging to Moses and to his brother, how saddening to their Father whose strong arm had led and sheltered His people. Yet how like the flesh is such reaction. Is it possible, Brethren and Sisters, that we might find the same dreadful tendencies in ourselves at times, even though recognizing that we, as Israel, are privileged in being called out to Him and His in the wilderness, and are led and sustained and given hope of an inheritance? If we can perceive the great help God granted to His people there, if we can discern what He

required, we can be helped in our time of probation and perhaps more keenly appreciate His oversight of our journey through this world to His promise.

“ — NO WATER FOR THE CONGREGATION — ”

The journeying of Israel was not easy or trouble free even though they were led by a wise and perfect Father. We see that as they reached the wilderness of Zin, “ — there was no water for the congregation: — ” Numbers 20:2 It may be difficult for us to realize what a grave predicament no water would present. We are able to turn on a tap and there is an abundance; we accept it and think little until the well goes dry, or the main breaks, or the pump fails, and then suddenly see that life is unbearable without it and could soon come to an end. This was the experience of God’s ecclesia in the wilderness. Why was it? Was it a test for them? Certainly they recognised that the cloud of God had led them. If this was believed, **He** had brought them to this dry and barren place. Not by chance or without purpose were they in this desert land. Did it not place a trial on their trust in the Father’s care for them, would He provide? Frustrated at finding no water:

“ — they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron. And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord!” Numbers 20:2, 3

They chode with Moses, contended or were adversaries to him, as this word means. In effect they rebelled against God and His hand. They wished they had died with those who died before the Lord. When did this occur? It was at the time of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram who rose up against their leaders and were swallowed up before the Lord, while two hundred and fifty princes who supported them were consumed by the fire of God’s judgment. The next day the congregation complained to Moses and Aaron saying:

“Ye have killed the people of the Lord.” Numbers 14:41

How they lacked in fear! Thus God was angry and sent a plague which consumed of the people of Israel, 14,700. It was stopped only when Aaron went among them and made an atonement for their sin. Those saved from death back at the time of Korah **now** wished they had died like their brethren. What a dreadful reproach to God, yet let us think carefully — how near this our own reasoning may be at times of great distress, for it is the flesh’s tendency to think — “It’s too hard. It’s unreasonable, unbearable — I wish

I could escape it somehow, “— quite overlooking or ignoring the obvious fact that God does lead His people into every circumstance they experience. He placed Israel in this precarious situation, not to cause their death for lack of water, but rather to prove whether they would remember His care and trust in Him. Are we not tried as well today, finding ourselves in difficult conditions under His hand as He watches to see our reactions? Do we accept, pray for his deliverance and that we might learn from Him? Do we trust and wait for the help He has promised to His people, or do we as Israel, fail, murmur, blame, becoming in fact adversaries to the right way?

In spite of the complaining and rejection of His counsel by Israel, God told Moses:

“Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes: and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.” Numbers 20:8

Here was God’s provision to give life to His people, revealing His longsuffering care for them. As water, contrary to all natural laws, burst forth out of the rock in sufficient abundance to provide for several million people and their many animals, what a marvel and what a blessing it was. Perhaps some in Israel felt shame and regretted their complaining, their chiding with Moses. Perhaps some in repentance sought God’s forgiveness for their lack of trust. Do we at certain times of failure, Brethren and Sisters, experience the same remorse, repentance when, in spite of our doubts, God grants His mercy, indeed all that is needed to sustain us spiritually as well as temporally?

This morning we have partaken in symbol of Jesus’ body and blood, that which gives life. Are we fully aware of how great is God’s love and care in this provision of **the** Rock and the life He makes possible? Should not our contemplation of this grace, strengthen us in our vow to be subject to His guidance, to trust Him as our Father, to be more faithfully and thankfully bound to His ecclesia in the wilderness?

“BECAUSE YE BELIEVED ME NOT —”

Yet more occurred at that rock in the desert of Zin. Moses and Aaron failed in the sight of God and Israel as they said:

“Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?” Numbers 20:10

God quickly spoke in rebuke, to chasten them:

“Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.” Verse 12
Both Aaron and Moses failed to sanctify the Lord. How? Numbers 20:24 records God’s words some time later, concerning Aaron as he died on Mount Hor:

“— he shall not enter into the land — because ye **rebelled** against my word at the waters of Meribah.”

This word used for rebelled is marah, meaning bitter. Moses and Aaron were bitter against God’s word at the rock in Meribah because of the provocation of the people. Further we find the word of God to Moses as he was about to die in sight of the land promised is equally clear and equally just. In Deuteronomy chapter 32, verse 51, we are told:

“Because ye **trespassed** against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin, because ye **sanctified** me not in the midst of the children of Israel.”

This helps us to see how offensive was the failure of our brethren at the waters of strife. They rebelled, they trespassed. It could be said in excuse that Moses and Aaron were provoked by the contrary nature, the murmuring, the chiding of the people. Indeed they were as Psalm 106:32, 33 tells us:

“They angered him (God) also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes; because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.”

The word used here for provoked is also marah, revealing how Moses’ flesh was made bitter or resentful by the unfaithfulness of the children of Israel, causing him to so speak. How much this tells us. Both Moses and Aaron had suffered from this rebellious nature of Israel for all their time in the wilderness. Indeed the wandering continued on for forty years because of the people’s refusal to trust in God. But whether provoked or not, Moses and Aaron were held accountable by God for their own bitterness and rebellion which brought them to trespass. They failed to sanctify their God because of anger and momentary hatred against their lot, given of God, as leaders of His people. Perhaps the key to God’s reason for refusing to allow them to enter into the land is

found in His words, "Because **ye believed me not to sanctify** me in the wilderness—" Sanctify comes from a word meaning to make clean and is used as to hallow, to keep holy. How did Aaron and Moses fail? They allowed their flesh nature to rise up, to become bitter. Their words were, "Must **we** fetch you water out of this rock?" Only God could do this, only He could provide the rock and the water, life-giving, which gushed forth from it. Only Yahweh could save His people, but Moses and Aaron provoked and embittered, took the power unto themselves. And further on this occasion Moses struck the rock two times. If Moses, as he would in his normal faithful thinking, perceived the rock at Meribah as a symbol of God's promised provision of **the Rock** who would in time to come, be smitten to provide life, would he have struck it more than once? Obviously not, and so being overcome by his feelings, Moses transgressed and so was rebuked and punished. How important it is in God's eyes that His people do sanctify Him. How can we better do this? Perhaps the rest of what is revealed concerning Moses' life gives us help. He still led the children of Israel. God still spoke to Israel through him. After Aaron died, Eleazar, his son became high priest, and God worked through him. Yet how greatly Moses would feel the loss of his brother — and each time he thought about it, he could have become bitter, he could have failed to accept, really accept, God's judgment. As he led Israel, and as they under his leadership conquered their enemies, as they came closer to the promised inheritance, Moses could have felt resentment, "hurt". For **he** had done so much of the work, had suffered so many of accusations, and now he was to be denied entrance into the land. But no, he accepted it without rancor, submitted to God's righteous judgment. Was he being further tested — would he hallow God's name, acknowledging that he had indeed failed? His determination to sanctify the Almighty for the rest of his life revealed that he had indeed learned from his experience at the waters of Meribah. We have an example of this spirit when, before his death Moses said:

"Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd."

Numbers 27:16, 17

Moses' care was for God's people, not immersed in his own loss. Did he not by submitting, putting self aside and relying on God's help, become worthy of the divine approbation so often mentioned, "Moses was — very meek — above all men — upon the earth."

THE REMNANT

Can we not try to be more like this man, Moses — with our Father's help and His Son's pleading for us, in submitting to whatever circumstances God places upon us. Let us accept our lot, whether it be sorrow, loss, illness or physical handicap and go on in faith, doing what God requires with grace. For let us recognize that we have much to learn and to conquer.

It is remembered that the high priest in Israel wore upon his forehead a golden plate engraved with the words "Holiness Unto The Lord". Holiness is related to the word sanctify. Was it not the mind, the steadfast thinking, and finally the victory of the antitypical High Priest, Jesus Christ, to sanctify God in all that He did? Must we not strive harder to follow after Him, remembering also David's words:

"O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him all the earth." Psalm 96:9

The comeliness, the glory, the excellency of holiness! **This** sanctifies the Lord. Is this our desire — to worship God in this way, each day, now? If it is and it is the first desire of our life, then we know the hope of doing so eternally, when this holiness, so beautiful, pervades the earth, and God's name is sanctified universally.

J.A.DeF.



“He Shall Direct My Paths”

In our readings in Proverbs, we are helped in the 3rd chapter verses 5 and 6 to perceive how God would have us move:

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

Here we see in these two proverbs of Solomon, much to help us to understand what it is we are to do in order to serve God acceptably, in order to move in right paths.

We are told to “acknowledge him” and in doing so, He shall direct our paths. We are not to lean on our own understanding, but to trust in God, and so be directed in the way we should go. “Direct”, we find means to make straight. Perhaps we do not know the direction we are to go, but if we appeal to God, coming in prayer, asking His help and not allowing our own thinking to take over, He will surely direct us as He has promised. This really is the only way to truly serve God. The Lord Jesus in Matthew 7 elaborates on this thought in verses 13 and 14:

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

This tells us the importance of looking to God in order to find the narrow way. We need His direction to make straight paths for our feet. Why is it that Israel did not find these straight paths? They learned to their own understanding, and so leaned to another source of help. Yet, there is only one true source of help and God has told us; to look to Him and acknowledge Him and He will direct our paths.

When we look at Israel we see that so few acknowledge God, and only a few were able to find the means of deliverance. We can think of Noah, living at a time when the world was far from God. Yet a few were acknowledging Him to the point that Noah built that ark to the saving of his house of eight souls — just a few. In essence, here was help to go the narrow way, yet how few took advantage of it.

We are to do good works, just as Noah's works pleased God. We are helped to recognize this when we look to Paul's words which he wrote to Titus chapter 3 verses 8 and 14:

"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

And let **our's** also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful."

"Ours" — or those striving to be God's children. We are perhaps allowed to see from Paul's words what is involved in attempting to apply God's Word in showing forth those good works. Discernible in Paul's words is a care to learn and maintain good works so that they be not unfruitful. As God has called us out to be His children, to show the fruits of the Spirit, it is by the fruits of our labors, or our good works, that we will be judged. We are told in II Corinthians 5:10—

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

The importance of our good works cannot be taken lightly, but should evoke us to acknowledge God so that our labors can rightly be directed, and we can be allowed to know that straight way.

Paul expressed a care to maintain good works. This word "careful" means to exercise thought and be anxious in maintaining or practising good works. Doesn't this point out that good works do not come naturally? We must be circumspect and allow room for God's Hand to guide us. In this same thought we are told in Proverbs 16:3—

"Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established."

Entrust or commit our works to the Lord. Isn't it the same thought as earlier, in this 3rd chapter of Proverbs, we looked at the way we must acknowledge God, to commit our works unto Him, and our thoughts shall be established.

Good works are only works which conform and align themselves to what He knows are right for us — works which are allowed to be directed because they give glory to God. Good works are to be maintained, we are told, as well as they must first be learned. What is required? First, a diligent heeding to the Hand of God upon us, to learn that God will and does direct in His own good time and that our hearts must be made to trust in Him and not in our own thinking.

We are helped further in Psalm 25:4 which are the words of David and the spirit of the Lord Jesus:

“Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths.”

Again, the simple but important words are revealed to us. Here “teach” is emphasized and a valuable lesson for all who are striving to please God. Here we are shown how to learn God’s ways, that we can be fortified by His **showing** us what He desires. Have we not constantly found when we are in uncertainties, when things in our probation come up, that we are not exactly sure what is to be done; when we go seeking for the Spirit to work, we have been helped and blessed because of that sensitivity. By the same token, we know that life in the Truth is a different way of thinking, which causes us to exercise restraint because the flesh tries to make its thinking important through subtle deception. Uncertainty besets us and we delay at times to do all that perhaps could be done. We know we fail to move at times as we should. Yet, how do we respond to our failures? It is in God’s mercy that he makes known our shortcomings to us and does chasten in order to direct our feet again, into those straight paths. Isn’t this part of the understanding that Solomon revealed in Proverbs — to lean not to our own understanding? Of ourselves, we can do very little; and, in fact we can do nothing in the way God requires us. But if we acknowledge our position of weakness through the Lord Jesus, our Mediator, God will provide the help and guidance necessary to show us, no matter how difficult the circumstances.

We might ask how did Jesus do perfect works? How was He able to move in all ways leaning on God? The answer may be that in true **humbleness** He witnessed to the world, glorifying God and by His living personified the saying; — “I am meek and lowly in heart...” In going to John 13:12-17 we see how this was put into action by the Lord Jesus:

“So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet.

For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”

Can we learn from this example of Jesus; and from this lesson in Proverbs chapter three, that in striving to do the works set before us, the good works the Spirit requires of us, we must do them with humbleness and sensitivity, making us always realize our place in the sight of God. If so, does this not give acknowledgement to Him? And as we acknowledge God and lean on Him, He will strengthen and guide us onto straight paths as promised in Proverbs 4:18:

“But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”

As we are helped to perform these good works, to show forth the Light, His Word, are we not really putting down ourselves, leaning not to our own understanding, and seeking that perfect day which God has set before us?

M.C.S.

A Sunday Morning Exhortation.

We have read this morning the counsel of the Most High through Moses the servant of God.

“And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.

And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not yet eaten of it? let him also go and return unto his house, lest he die, in the battle, and another man eat of it. And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her.”

(Duet. 20:5-7)

Here is exhibited the mind of God. Moses had said (verse 4) “The Lord your God is He that goeth with you, to fight for you — — — to save you.”

Yet there was not an unqualified promise that in this there would be no casualties.

So the mercy of God shines out, if a man has a new house let him dedicate it, that is put it to the use for which the man had toiled and laboured; if he had toiled at the work of establishing a grape plantation let him at least enjoy the fruit of that labour at its first inception. If he be engaged to be married, return lest the tragedy of the death of one betrothed occur.

This wonderful counsel of God tells us how mindful God is; how caring. Not wishing tragedy on anyone; but not promising there won't be, if caution is not taken to prevent it happening. Not even if a people are fighting the Lord's battle.

When Israel fought in battle God could of course save them from being killed. As in the case of David, who on one occasion became faint, and near to becoming slaughtered, but was saved by Abishai who succoured him and saved him from the enemy. Yet in Acts 12:2 we read of the enemy Herod killing James the brother of John with the sword. God could have stopped the enemy from doing this, but in His sublime and unfathomable purpose God allowed it to happen; but at the same time prevented Herod from doing the same to Peter.

What then are we being told in Deuteronomy chapter 20? God is very mindful, very caring; will warn of matters that we might overlook in connection with what we may think is required of us by the truth, but which could bring us into tragedy. If we ignore (in expecting too much of God) there may be tragedy. We are to realise this, and so in our arrangements are to take care lest the enemy does succeed in some cases to destroy, leaving a very sad outcome.

We continue in this 20th chapter of Deuteronomy and read:

“When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it.

And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee.

And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it:

And when the Lord thy God hath delivered it unto thy hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword:

But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself: and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord thy God hath given thee.

Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations.”

(Deut. 20:10-15)

Mercy must be shown even to the enemy. Seek peace. That is the first principle. In the case of Israel, who as the nation of God were required to make war at times, if the attempt to make peace was resisted, then the enemy was to be overcome, because he was an unyielding enemy to the reasonable approach of the Truth. But even in this overcoming of those who were opponents there was to be mercy to the weak and defenceless. The women and the little ones must be spared and there was to be no wanton destruction.

Ah, but it was to be very different concerning those, so to speak **INSIDE**, that is the nations in the land they had inherited. Not one of them must be allowed to remain inside. The alien must be cut off from amongst them. Hence:-

“But of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth:

But thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee:

“That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so should ye sin against the Lord your God.”

(Deut. 20:16-18)

Yes, the alien was to be utterly cut off from amongst them, with a very good reason given, for what appeared to be a drastic action:

“That they teach you not to do after all their abominations.”

This instruction showed distinctly the love of God for His people. We have heard some say of those events of that time against the Canaanites, “what a dreadful thing to do, to so cut them off.” Such have not the perception of the love of God for His people. Make peace says God with the enemy, but the enemy (the alien) must be utterly cut off from amongst my people.

Seeing that all life is God given, He has the just prerogative for so commanding, that, that which is harmful to His people, should be taken away with drastic action. Those cut off were in any case beyond saving; those who could be saved, that is God's people, were to be safeguarded in every way possible, even though drastic action needed to be taken. In concluding the study of this chapter we read:

“When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them: for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down (for the tree of the field is man's life) to employ them in the siege:

Only the trees which thou knowest that they be not trees for meat, thou shalt destroy and cut them down; and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it be subdued.”

(Deut. 20:19-20)

In these words, God forewarns that His people may have difficult conditions, difficult circumstances. Something which may take a long time to overcome. In dealing with it, do not be too drastic, be reasonable, do not destroy indiscriminately, in the long toil of the difficult circumstance. That is what God is saying. Not only to Israel, but to us, for this instruction is also for us. Consider the need for the future at the same time as considering the need for the present. In the practical position of that time they must only cut down (destroy) those trees which would not have a future use, as would those trees which bore fruit. So we see how mindful, how caring, is God in His instruction. Allowing for the present, but instructing His people to consider also for the future and exercise care in what they do in a long struggle and difficulty that may come their way.

How wonderful is all this counsel of God, through Moses, preparing, instructing, warning the people of God before they had to face the difficulties which this counsel foresaw. And as these words come down for these days are we not to draw our own lessons from these things in the circumstances we have to face?

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

“O Lord, I have heard thy speech, (message) and was afraid.” (Habakkuk 3:2)

“When I heard, — — — my lips quivered at the voice; rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest (have rest) in the day of trouble — — —.”
(verse 16)

The prophet in the vision of God had seen a dreadful future coming, he shook with astonishment and horror of what he had been shown. That future time seen all those many years ago, is now upon us.

The horror and destruction of a nuclear attack on Greater Manchester (for example) has recently been spelled out by one of the leading British Scientists. Eight one megaton bombs would utterly devastate the whole area. Blast, fire and the resulting atomic dust would eliminate Bolton, Bury, Wigan, Rochdale, Oldham, Tameside, Stockport, Trafford, Salford and Central Manchester, wiping out every man, woman and child.

Only a few important people in deep underground shelters with essential supplies including oxygen would have a chance to survive such an onslaught; but for how long? This professor warned:

“These are entirely plausible scenarios. Some such weapons of comparable size are doubtless already targeted on London and Manchester and also Moscow and Leningrad — — — while single larger nuclear blasts would still occur the most likely scenario was the ‘combined effects of multiple explosions.’ ”

This physics scientist warned that the new idea was to have a large number of small warheads in strategic position because of the greater destruction they could wreak than a single explosion having the same total explosive yield.

It is a terrifying picture for those who have no hope in God. The latest policy of the international antagonists seems to be to

have a hair-trigger "launch on warning" schedule for nuclear missile forces. This would mean, for example, firing Soviet missiles on the basis of computer calculations warning that an American nuclear attack was under way. This reveals there would be no waiting for Soviet territory to be bombed before Russia retaliated.

Such a policy undoubtedly carries the risk of a computer error triggering off world nuclear disaster. The idea previously has been "launch under attack" which meant firing only in retaliation after the opposing forces missiles had struck their target. As a result it was assumed that both sides would be destroyed in such an exchange, and so therefore would never set into motion something that would bring about their own destruction.

But now there is this development of "first strike capability" which Russia has been accusing the United States of preparing. That is to have the overwhelming power, for example, to knock out Soviet nuclear forces in a single blow.

The fact that Russia thinks America is gearing itself for this capability, even though it may not be, reveals that Russia is coming to feel that it has no alternative to the policy of a nuclear launch on warning system. Even though quite recently Russia vowed it would not be the first power to use nuclear weapons.

So in this computerised age, men are becoming more and more reliant upon machines, which though so intricately and cleverly made, can go wrong and give a false message.

The United States does rely heavily on computer warning systems, and the Pentagon has refused to deny that it has a launch on warning policy, even though the U.S. President has also stated that America will never use nuclear weapons unless attacked.

Soviet officials have privately stated that the N.A.T.O. plan to place new American medium-range missiles in Western Europe from next year would greatly increase the risk of a surprise attack from the West and force the Soviet Union to adopt this launch on warning policy. A Russian military leader, in fact, has called for the Soviet Union to fund new military expenditures for counter-attack "without hesitation". This of course would make "rigid demands" for "further enhancing the combat readiness of the Russian army in technical equipment increasing the ability of control and communication".

He said it was necessary that the "influence of the factor of surprise be reduced to a minimum so that the aggressor should not be tempted to use with impunity its nuclear weapons first."

So the nuclear threat grows darker and more ominous, when such fine timing in war preparations is seen to be going on. No wonder the prophets said:

"I trembled in myself, that I might rest (have rest) in the day of trouble."

This is the rest which yet remains for the children of God, the only hope in these dark and evil times. Those rejected by the Lord Jesus Christ will also have to face the horror of what is coming, along with all those who will not have Him to reign over them.



The Repeating of the Lesson

In the book of Deuteronomy Chapter 1 and verse 6 we read:-
"The Lord our God spake to us in Horeb saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount."

words spoken by Moses at a very significant time, namely, verse 3:-
" ——— in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month ———"

i.e. the very end of the children of Israel's forty years wandering in the wilderness.

May we consider for a moment the meaning of the word Deuteronomy, which is — a repeating of the Law.

Perhaps we may be helped by a consideration of Genesis 41:32 which no doubt gives the reason for this doubling or repeating, as Deuteronomy means.

"And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice it **is because** the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass."

Continuing then in Deuteronomy chapter 1:14-17:-

“And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou hast spoken is good for us to do.

So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men and known
 ——— And I charged your judges at that time saying,
 Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge right-
 eously between every man and his brother. — — —

Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear
 the small as well as the great, ye shall not be afraid of the
 face of man, for the judgment is God's and the cause that
 is too hard for you, bring it unto me and I will hear it.”

What a wealth of instruction then is contained in these few
 verses, which take our minds to the case recorded in Numbers
 15:32 of the man found gathering sticks on the sabbath day. Then
 in verse 34 we read:-

“And they put him inward because it was not declared
 what should be done unto him.”

Was this an instance of a case that was too hard for them, of not
 being able of themselves to judge righteous judgment? and so it
 would appear that the cause was taken to Moses their mediator,
 who took it to God, whose answer was — “The man shall be surely
 put to death.” Surely righteous judgment when we consider that
 it was not for the gathering of sticks that the man was condemned,
 for he could have done this on any other day and been blameless;
 but it was for the man's obvious failure to obey God's law con-
 cerning the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, not perceiving the meaning
 of the teaching, that there was to be a Sabbath that remaineth for
 the children of God, when all work and toil shall cease.

Back then to Deuteronomy 1:7-8:-

“Turn you and take your journey — — —.

Behold, I have set the land before you, go in and possess
 the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers, Abraham,
 Isaac and Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after
 them.”

What then is the lesson in all this for us? Are we not nearing
 the end of our wilderness journey? The land — the Kingdom —
 is virtually in sight. We are facing many difficulties at this time,

and probably have many yet to face. There may be problems which we may feel are too hard for us, but can we not take comfort in the fact that we do have a mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, like the children of Israel had in Moses, who can and will take the problems to our God for an answer. We know that we have, but what of the great difficulty that we may have to face? Could it be that we have dwelt long enough in our present position, and is there the need to turn, that is, to take stock of our present position, both individually and ecclesially, and if we are shown that we have “dwelt long enough” — then we must turn.

By nature we do not like to change, we would all rather carry on in our own ways, especially if we are reasonably comfortable, for we do not like to change, but we must; we are all liable to “compass this mountain” perhaps too long, for we all need to be changed, and we can only be changed by turning. Perhaps we may be helped to see this by a consideration of Revelation Ch. 1:9-10 and 12:-

“I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, — — — for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.

And I **turned** to see the voice that spake with me. And **being turned**, I saw seven golden candlesticks.”

Can we fail to receive the teaching in all this? What if John had not turned?

Yes, we **all** need to turn, to change, to alter; either in our manner of living or in our mode of thinking which controls our actions; to enable us to judge righteous judgment to do justice and to walk in humility before God.

We each one have a work to do, just as Aaron and his sons had. They were led by the pillar of fire and cloud, night and day. When the children of Israel had dwelt long enough in one place they had to move on.

This really is one of the hallmarks of the Truth when we consider that there is no standing still for long in the Truth — we either go backwards or forwards.

Let us then make sure that our turnings in our journey will be for ever forward.

J.S.

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, Orchard Park and Buffalo.

Alternative Week: Revelation Study.

Gratitude is felt for the reaching out of brethren and sisters, helping to make trials more bearable.

Supplications are made for those in illness and weakness, that healing and strength may be granted according to the Father's will.

As the diplomats and politicians struggle to bring peace to no avail, we know the end of Gentile times is nearing when all such turmoil will be removed by the Prince of Peace. It is a time greatly longed for with hope of being accounted worthy to be with Him.

J.A.DeF.

"PENTRIP" Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread: Sundays 11.30 a.m.

Bible Class: Midweek.

The year has passed quickly and Autumn comes again. It is a reminder of the fleeting existence of life, enabling us to consider the hope set before us of the time coming which will not be for a brief span with trials and difficulties, but with joy for evermore.

We have been grateful for the good weather this summer and also for other provisions received.

per D.L.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, Manchester

Breaking of Bread: Sundays 11.30 a.m.

Bible Class: 7.30 p.m. in the ante room to large hall, Wednesday evening.

We were encouraged by the interest shown by strangers who attended our last lecture, this helps us to feel our witness is having some effect.

We have been glad also to receive communication expressing gratitude for our magazine from South Africa, and also have been able to send information to an enquiry from West Australia.