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A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

"Take heed that ye be not deceived"

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AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

THE LESSONS OF KADESH

Through the word of God recorded in Numbers, we are permitted to journey with our brethren in Israel as they approached the land promised to them. The journey had been a long one, almost forty years — long because they had refused to trust God at Kadesh, had balked at entering the land because of fear, fear of man, not fear of God. Over these forty years since their rebellion against their Creator, those who were responsible and had refused to obey had died, as God saw fit, until now most had perished. Those few who were left would know that their allotted time of wandering was drawing to a close and therefore time left for them was short. Caleb and Joshua were the exceptions, for they had been faithful at Kadesh.

We ponder, what was the mind of our brethren after this long period of sojourn, how did they feel as they realized that the entrance into their promised inheritance was imminent? God knew their minds and He tested them as we read:

“Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh . . . And there was no water for the congregation —” Numbers 20:1, 2

How striking that this testing occurred at Kadesh. We remember it was at this place that the faithless spies persuaded the people of Israel that they could not conquer the land because of its giants, its walled cities, and its strong and many people. Now so many years later, once again Israel failed to believe their Father. He would provide what was needed. At other times in their wanderings they had found themselves without water but God had supplied it. Where was their trust, we might ask? Yet do we not also fail to rely on Him in times of trial, fail to keep firmly in mind that He has always provided? He has promised and will not fail; any failure must inevitably be our own.

“THE PEOPLE CHODE WITH MOSES”

Israel, in their sad lack:

“—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! And why have ye brought up the congregation

of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there? And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us into this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink." Numbers 20:2-5

Such was the strife with Moses, after almost forty years of provision by God, of water and manna, the means of life itself. The Hebrew word used here for chide is *riyb*, meaning to contend, to strive, to debate, or to rebuke. We find the same word used in Numbers 20:13

"This is the water of Meribah; because the children of Israel strove with the Lord—"

It is noteworthy that the name given there was Meribah—a word derived from this Hebrew word *riyb*, to strive or chide.

If we go back to another time, at Rephidim, when Israel was tested by a lack of water, we find:

"—and there was no water for the people to drink. Wherefore the people did *chide* with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? Wherefore do ye tempt the Lord?—and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us with thirst?" Exodus 17:1-3

This occurred within a very short time of their deliverance from Egypt. Yet in spite of their complaining and discontent, God provided water out of the rock for them at Rephidim, saying to Moses:

"Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink." Exodus 17:6

Their Father in His mercy granted them water; enough for between two and three million people and their cattle, so it was not a small spring but a plentiful flow. Further we are told, at Rephidim:

"—he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not?" Exodus 17:7

Massah-tempting, testing . . . *Meribah*-strife, contention. What a sharp rebuke the Almighty gave to His people.

Now, forty years later, another generation—cared for, led, fed, given food and water: yet again, “they chode with Moses at Kadesh” where once again God used the name, “the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the Lord—” Numbers 20:13.

Brethren and Sisters, is there not a grave warning in these experiences for us? How easily we can overlook the steadfast mercy and provision of God because we are overly concerned about our everyday needs, forgetting that if we are determined to please our Father, we must wait in patience and He will most surely provide for us. Do we not need to look beyond today, beyond the demands and personal wants of this life? Are we not required to put aside doubt, and trust that in all circumstances, He is there, knows our every need precisely and will supply what is absolutely right for our need.

Israel failed to sanctify God at Kadesh, as they refused to go into the land. They failed earlier at Rephidim, within days of leaving Egypt. Now after having had much care and protection in their long journey, they failed again at Kadesh; they chode with God. The Almighty was testing them, even as He tests us. Each of us has certain weaknesses, tendencies of which possibly only the Father is aware, and He brings about circumstances which will reveal where we place our trust by probing these weak spots. How do we respond? It is a question we need to ask often, Brethren and Sisters. Do we submit, accept the One who is guiding our lives, or do we fret, struggle against our situation, look for something better, in effect chiding with God? We may ask, “How can I chide against God?” We can do this by resisting, seeking our own ways and solutions.

In our desire to grow in that spirit which is so pleasing to our Father, we find Isaiah’s words are a salutary reminder:

“Woe unto him that striveth (chides) with his Maker!—
Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou?”
Ch. 45:9

As God has created and is now shaping us and forming us, dare we question saying, “What are you doing to me?” No—we must not. But we do need very seriously to question, “What am I to learn from this hard experience? What am I lacking?”

“HE SPAKE UNADVISEDLY WITH HIS LIPS”

Turning back now to our brethren at Kadesh in Numbers chapter twenty, where the people contended with Moses, we are told:

“—Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they fell on their faces: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto them.”
verse 6

God’s presence was there to counsel Moses and Aaron in their trial, and He spoke to Moses saying:

“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—”
Verse 8

Moses did this, but first in his vexation and frustration at his people’s great lack, he said to all the congregation:

“ . . . Hear now, ye rebels; must *we* fetch you water out of this rock?”
Verse 10

The Hebrew word for rebel is, significantly, *Marah*, to be bitter, to rebel, to provoke. This gives us insight into how Moses felt about his people at this time. In consequence of Moses’ words, God was angry and spoke to him and to Aaron.

“—Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation unto the land, which I have given them.”
Verse 12

Their lack was a failure to give the glory to God, rather than taking it upon themselves saying, “—must *we* fetch you water out of the rock?” It was God’s power that accomplished this miracle, not Moses or Aaron. Something overcame their fear of God, their resolve to sanctify Him in all their doings, and so God was displeased. What was it that interfered? David reveals this for us as he wrote about circumstances then:

“They angered him (God) also at the waters of strife (Meribah) so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes: because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.”
Psalm 106:32-33

Israel provoked Moses’ spirit. They “*marah*ed” his spirit, making it bitter, resentful, rebellious at the moment and so it went ill with him. Can we enter into the minds of Moses and Aaron there at Kadesh where Israel had failed to sanctify God forty years before? Had not Israel murmured against their leaders, really against God, for all of those long years of wandering? Can we see why these two faithful men could understandably be provoked, made bitter by the repeated rebellion of their people? They were guilty however, and the Father rebuked and punished them. He

prevented them from leading the children of Israel into the promised inheritance. To our human reasoning, this may seem a hard judgment; but we know without doubt that God is just, also righteous. He was angry at their failure to honor Him, at their succumbing to their own feelings of bitterness at the burden placed upon them. Is it not true that we are at times in measure similarly tested, Brethren and Sisters? Our trial goes on over a long period of time, throughout our whole lifetime really. Will we do our determined best to sanctify our God?—will we strive to please Him in spite of the provocations and worries which come upon us? God's glory had appeared to Moses and Aaron as He commanded, "Speak unto the rock." They did—but *unadvisedly*. It was the flesh speaking, roused and embittered by the long time chiding of Israel. Moses may have felt, "I have had forty years of this, and it's just too much for me to bear." Yet, may we ever yield to the feeling that it is "too much"? The Lord Jesus could easily have felt that way. Indeed He did say unto His Father in agony, "—Take this cup from me:" but with submission He added the words of great example, "—nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt." from Mark 14:36. Much help may be had in striving to absorb this spirit of the Lord Jesus, which He expressed so simply in saying, "Abba, Father." In effect His words acknowledged, "My Father—as a child I submit and trust." With this mind we can withstand provocation, repeated pressure, and disappointment which is a sore trial. Let us remember that it is God's way of testing our weaknesses, His probing to determine if in all things, in all circumstances we will sanctify Him. Let us keep in mind in this consideration, that in spite of the chiding of Israel, in spite of Moses' and Aaron's failure at Kadesh, water did gush out of that rock, for the life-saving of His people. God did provide, will ever do so in His loving kindness and mercy.

So then, as we think carefully about these examples from our brethren of old shall we not determine to profit by their experiences? Let us be resolved that we will use care and be alert, undistracted, that indeed *our* Kadeshes (opportunities to sanctify God) do not become Meribahs (strife and contention) resulting in loss and grief.

J.A.DeF

ZACCHAEUS' EXAMPLE

In our portion in Luke, we are following the ministry of the Lord Jesus, and in so doing are helped by the circumstances with which He was confronted.

We read in Luke chapter 19, the first 10 verses, of the situation and circumstances surrounding the incident when the Lord Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem and passed through Jericho, and confronted a man named Zacchaeus who was very rich. Zacchaeus sought the Lord Jesus, but because he was small in stature and the people pressed near, he climbed a tree in anticipation of the Lord Jesus who was coming.

When Jesus came to that tree, he saw Zacchaeus and said:

“ . . . Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house.” Verse 5

This circumstance is to be more than just an interesting story; as we recognize in Jesus' speaking and Zacchaeus' responding, there is help for us, if we are to value our place in the sight of God. The response of Zacchaeus was one of obedience, as we read in verse 6:

“And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.”

This word *joyfully* means to be calm, happy, or well off. In essence, Zacchaeus wasn't overwhelmed by Jesus, but received Him, revealing that Zacchaeus was a person who knew what God required; and, was one who obviously had failed, and was used by Jesus to reveal what our spirit must be like. In this circumstance, we see the response of the people around Zacchaeus — how the crowd felt toward Zacchaeus. Jesus was to be a guest with a man who was a sinner!

Jesus often went to the house of those who were sinners and publicans; and, the response of the people was usually one of murmuring, thinking that others were sinners, and not that ALL are prone to failure. Zacchaeus revealed, however, that he was prone to failure, yet ready to make amends, as verse 8 continues:

“ . . . Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.”

Hardly a response of one who was a publican — whom we know was a Jew who collected taxes for the Romans, despised by the Jews; yet, in Zacchaeus' case, obviously valuing the Word of God,

desiring to do what was right in the sight of God. It reveals the humble and submissive spirit God looks for in His children. Because he was a publican, it didn't prevent him from being what God required: to keep the Law and apply the things of the Law in the spirit of truth.

We are perhaps helped to see this in Jesus' response in verses 9 and 10:

“And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forso much as he also is a son of Abraham.
For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Here we have revealed the fact that Jesus had come — the means of salvation was there; and, Zacchaeus perceived that through the Lord Jesus would come that salvation, that means of over-coming, and that means of knowing the promises given to Abraham.

When we go to John 8:34-39, we read where Jesus answered those who were professing to be Abraham's seed, but did not do what was required:

“Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.
And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.
If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.
I know that ye are Abraham's seed: but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.
I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.
They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father.
Jesus said unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.”

This speaks of what distinguished Abraham's seed: those who did the works of Abraham, and were moved as God spoke to them. Faith was the important ingredient.

To be the son of Abraham, there must be that same faith, that same desire to move at God's command and direction. This is why Zacchaeus came to Jesus, for he valued the promises of Abraham, and sought the means of attaining them.

In another example, we see how the publican is used for our help. In Matthew 9:10-13, contrasts are given between the things of the flesh versus the things of the spirit; that which is on the surface, opposed to that which is in the heart.

“And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.

And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?

And when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

Here we see again what God looks for. He looks for mercy rather than sacrifice; He looks for the application of His Word as opposed to applying that Word without considering what that Word means. This opposing spirit was why the people murmured over Zacchaeus. They desired to be with the Lord Jesus, but for the wrong reason; wanted, perhaps, to see what He could do — yet, the right spirit was not in their hearts. They were rather quick to look at Zacchaeus as a sinner, and did not look to the fact that they were sinners also.

Again in Luke 18:10-14, the parable of the Pharisee and the publican is given:

“Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

I tell you, this man went down to his house *justified* rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

This also speaks to us of the contrast between the spirit and the flesh — one who in the flesh's eyes was abhorrent, the publican; but, in the spirit's eyes, a sinner who “smote upon his breast.” It is the humbling of ourselves in the sight of God that can bring that justification spoken here. *Justified* means to be rendered innocent. The word *Zacchaeus* also means to be innocent, transparent, clear, translucent. Isn't this what God is really looking for? A heart which seeks to be innocent? This is required of us to recognize that we are prone to failure and so must seek the mercy of God.

When we go to Hebrews 11, we read in verses 17-19 the consideration of Isaac's being offered, of the promises held out. Here was a sacrifice which God required Abraham to make, and one Abraham said he was willing to perform:

“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,
Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.”

How great a faith was Abraham's, And because of his faith, what was it that was given to Abraham? Mercy — God's working with him and showing himself strong on behalf of Abraham. In essence, Abraham showed the humility and innocence which is necessary to truly value God's provision.

Going back to Luke 19, can we see what is required of us through Zacchaeus' example? A recognition that we are lost and of our own selves cannot be justified; but, only through God's mercy and forgiveness. We, too, must give of what we have and put down our flesh, and receive what we must do joyfully, rather than disdain what God requires of us.

Can we value what God reveals to us in these words — the need, not to exalt ourselves, but rather to be humbled, put down ourselves — and when the Lord Jesus comes, there will be exalting and an abiding with Him in the House of God.

M.C.S.



THE BURNING BUSH

“Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to a mountain of God, even to Horeb.

And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.” (Exodus 3:1-3)

How easy it is to pass over these words in a superficial way. Forty years Moses had lived a peaceful and simple life; previously he had known the sophistication of Egypt when he had walked that land with a degree of authority as the adopted son of Pharaoh’s daughter. The break with Egypt came when Moses was forty years of age. It could have come at a later date, or it need not have come at all in the way it happened if God had purposed otherwise. But God designed that it came when Moses was forty years of age. God also designed that Moses should be with a flock of sheep in the desert forty years. What then was happening to Moses during those forty years? Apparently nothing at all! Just a quiet, uninterrupted life, caring for a flock in the harsh conditions of a desert land, where there was intense heat and little water. Yet though ostensibly nothing was happening, a great deal was truly happening! In that quiet existence Moses’ character was being formed.

We need to remember that in an impulsive act, he had slain a man. An Egyptian, yes, but it was still the slaying of a man. The Egyptian, as is well known, had been smiting one of his brethren and this raised the ire of Moses. But to intervene, slay, and hide by silencing the Egyptian and by burying him, was a hot impulse.

Every day Moses’ brethren were being chastised and pushed in grinding toil. That one act could not deliver his brethren. Furthermore, Moses was to learn the unappreciation of his brethren who he was trying to help.

“And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou fellow?

And he said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.”

(Exodus 2:13-14)

So Moses' brethren gave him away. It would be a bitter experience. Hence Moses would have much to ruminate upon as he looked after that flock in the desert. Obviously after forty years he had given up all thought of going back to help his brethren again. And yet they did need help, and on a large and proper scale. So God came to Moses at the right time and the right place. There was a bush in Horeb; and the scripture defines the place unmistakably, it was in the mountain of God, the place that could be called God's mountain at a later time, for it was there that God came down to recite His law when the nation of Israel came out of Egypt. This bush was on fire; but what really distinguished this bush from all others bushes, was that it did not burn away.

Why should God appear to Moses in this way, rather than in any other way? God could have appeared in all sorts of ways. This was no haphazard thing, and therefore not being haphazard, it was unquestionably to teach a feature of God's simple and yet sublime Truth. Every bush that ever existed is subject to decay or consumption by fire. That is how God has made these things. But if God wants to do, He can make a bush that does *not* decay, and therefore *cannot* be consumed by fire.

This was the God who was now appearing to Moses. The God *who can* give uncorruptibility, imperishibility. Now this was something indeed impressive. Moses said to himself "this (is a) great sight." For our part also, who can look back in belief, and see what has happened through the divinely preserved record, it is a great sight.

Every living thing perishes in time, and so is consumed as though by fire. Fire can be a fitting figure of destruction through death, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." But we can see from the Burning Bush that God can stay this process of decay.

In connection with this miracle of life, this God-enhanced condition, God revealed His name. And what a name that was!

"Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."
(Exodus 3:6)

"And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?"

And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.”

(verses 13-15)

This is my memorial unto all generations. This, then, must include our own generation, calling upon us also to remember God by this revelation — “I am that I am”, “I am” hath sent you to the children of Israel. “I” (ANIY (an-ee) i.e. “I” — “me” or “myself”. “Am” Heb. HAYAH (haw yaw) i.e. “to exist” or “to be” (in the sense of existence). Looking exhaustively in the concordance the link word of our translation “that”, is not to be found from the original Hebrew as far as can be ascertained.

So we are left to consider the rendering — “I exist” — “I exist”, hath sent you. Now here is something very simple and yet profoundly sublime. He who exists — who says “I exist”, and repeats “I exist” i.e. a double emphasis, sends to the children of Israel. He *does* exist; He is the only One who *has always* existed! Therefore obviously, anything that has existed after Him exists through Him. How apt then is the name, as given in the message of the burning bush. He is the only One who can give help. He who is the source of everything, for He has always been there; furthermore, will always be there. He can make human, perishing nature, as the burning bush, that is, unconsumable. And He sends to Israel, to bring them out of bondage. He remembers the need, and remembers His promises.

Those who receive of this favour (though thinking themselves hopelessly unworthy) have found consideration and mercy in His sight. He who exists is aware of those who exist by Him and of their potential for His eternal purpose. Here then is the God in whom there is hope; and there is none else to look to. Every differing conception is the shadow and figment stemming from man's delusion and superstition.

So as we think of Moses, whose character went under a refining process in a time of obscurity, let us not in our own obscurity overlook what is being done for us. God revealed Himself to Moses ‘as He really is’ at a time when great things were about to follow that period of obscurity for Moses, and it is the same for us today.

INQUIRED OF THE LORD

“Then they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines fight against Keilah, and they rob the threshingfloors.
Therefore David inquired of the Lord, — — —.”

(1 Sam. 23:1-2)

How characteristic this was of David to inquire of the Lord.

“Then David inquired of the Lord yet again. And the Lord answered him — — —.” (verse 4)

Again verses 10-11:-

“Then said David, O Lord God of Israel, — — —.
— — — And the Lord said, — — —.”

And so we have in this record a conversation as it were, between man and God, David asking and God answering. Is there not a lesson in this for us? showing the constant need for us to ask of God, for God does answer.

His overruling care is seen in verse 14:-

“ — — — And Saul sought him (David) every day, but God delivered him not into his hand.”

Verse 16—

“And Jonathan Saul’s son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God.”

Why was this? Surely because David was wise, feared God and was obedient and in his inquiring of God showed his faith. We too, ask of God, and no doubt, especially in this last year or so, we have been answered and helped, proving what has been declared:-

“The Lord shall be with you as long as ye are with Him.”

and:-

“I shall never leave thee nor forsake thee.”

The danger then is in departing from God. This has always been so.

At the time of Moses the Ecclesia were told by him that although they had been placed in the way of salvation it was only by compliance with God’s conditions stated in the simple covenant to which all had assented, they could be kept in the way. Departure from the way meant death.

“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, — — —.”

(Deut. 30:19)

God was quite specific in His requirement that any wrong done in His Ecclesia should be dealt with. The sinner, upon confession of his sin and making the necessary offering could be forgiven, but the one who flouted God's law was to be cut off. It will be seen at once that such a person renounced the covenant which placed him in his relationship with God, and God made it very clear that no one could be kept in that relationship who destroyed that covenant.

Apologists for error in these days especially those who have departed from the Truth, refer to the misdeeds and transgressions of those in Israel to show thereby that quite an amount of error can be tolerated without steps being taken to remove those guilty of error. Such reasoning is entirely opposed to the Spirit either in the Old Testament or the New.

There is a difference between the Ecclesia in the wilderness and the Ecclesia at the present time. The Ecclesia in the wilderness was the Kingdom of God, God was their King, and sin was to be dealt with according to God's law. Mercy was seen in forgiveness, but defiance of the law could not be tolerated. (A brief reflection will bring to mind the many punishments which God brought upon the Ecclesia to remind them of this fact. Famine, drought, pestilence and the sword in turn ravaged the ranks of the Ecclesia because of their failure to maintain their allegiance to the covenant they had made and ultimately when as a nation they would no longer respond to chastisement they were cast off. Though cast off and scattered as Moses had forewarned them they were and still are a reminder among the nations of the requirements of God in His people.

The universal distress and plight of the Jews today is a consequence of a failure to uphold the covenant made with God.

May then the important truth be seen now, that the devine conditions for keeping the Body in the way of life are exactly the same. Failure to deal with any wrong in the Ecclesia can only have one result, for wrong is like leaven. The warning of the Spirit is seen in 1 Cor. 5:6:—

“— — — Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.”

The warning of God in this regard are many and can only be neglected at the expense of losing the Truth. No amount of philosophy or fallacious charity can be an effective substitute for God's requirements in His Ecclesia. It may appear kind to be indulgent towards those who are in error, but none can be kinder than God. Matthew 18 says, Go and tell him, if he will not hear tell it to the Ecclesia, if he will not hear the Ecclesia, — —we know the answer, we know what God requires.

Condoning error through kindness can only have one result as the Spirit clearly shows and it will not be long before error takes away a few more companions until all are lost, in the figure of the Spirit—all becomes leavened.

It could not have been easy or pleasant for Paul to have to say to the Galatians in chapter 3:1:—

“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, — — —.”

and then in Galatians 5:12:-

“I would they were even cut off which trouble you.”

Lest a wrong impression be given that dealing with wrong is always harsh and without mercy, may the clear command of the Lord Jesus in regard to this matter be stated. He says that those who are wrong, and persisting in wrong, are perishing. His merciful and loving message is seen in Matthew 18:14:-

“Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.”

And so three opportunities are given, and should these three opportunities bring no response then such a one becomes a rebel and must be judged by the Ecclesia as an heathen man and a publican.

We cannot improve on divine guidance and instruction, especially as we are shown in the case of Saul and David. Saul was carried away by his own reasoning and fearing the people. David inquired of God. Saul was left to his own devices, while David, by inquiring diligently and often, earned the title of, a man after God's own heart.

We too have asked, inquired of God — and been answered. The question is, will we always act faithfully?

J.S.

The Signs of His Coming and of the End of the World.

“— — — the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.”
(Isaiah 33:7)

In the national press large advertisements have begun to appear inviting World Governments to contract with the ‘World Government of the Age of Enlightenment’ to solve their problems on the basis of cost reimbursement after the target is reached. The advertisement stems from the founder of the “Science of Creative Intelligence and the Technology of the Unified Field”, who has said:—

“With the blessings of Guru Dev; life on earth now is on the doorstep of the perpetual sunshine of the Age of Enlightenment.”

It is also stated that the invitation to all governments to solve their problems is a wave of fulfilment of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of — — — worldwide Transcendental Meditation Movement (1957-1983).

From Israel comes the news that Israel’s Foreign Minister has declared that if the Soviet Union restored diplomatic relations with Israel which were broken off with Israel after the 1967 Middle East War, Israel would consider “letting the Russians into the Middle East peace process.”

The King of Jordan has also proposed to renew his participation in the Middle East peace process following the changed status of the Palestinian organisation.

In Great Britain, at a lower level, a campaign is under way asking for the support of ordinary men and women to sign their names to a petition which has been drawn up in the United Nations General Assembly, having the support of “the Churches”, “Oxfam”, “War on Want”, “World Development Movement”, and the “United Nations Association” etc. The petition calls for a total halt on the development and distribution of all Nuclear weapons, including Cruise, Pershing 2, Trident and SS 20’s so ending the waste of human resources and removing the nuclear nightmare.

From Russia has come a response in the suggestion by the Soviet President that Russia will dismantle and destroy a considerable number of Soviet SS 20 missiles now threatening Europe, depending on America cancelling the deployment of Cruise and Pershing 2 missiles in Europe and as long as Russia is allowed to match the

one hundred and sixty two British and French missiles. West Germany's Chancellor seemed to be impressed by this development towards limiting medium-range nuclear weapons, and led him to express hope that agreement was possible at the next International Arms talk being prepared in Geneva. Previously Britain and France have maintained that the Anglo-French missiles cannot be counted in the United States—Soviet Union medium-range missile equation. Russia's offer, doubtless, will cause some embarrassment to the British Government which has been noticeably resolute upon building up its nuclear strength, and has been gearing the nation's finances accordingly. However with all this talk about peace and reduction of weaponry, plans may be altered; but what can not radically alter is the eventual outcome of another world war. Then "the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly" having failed in their efforts to smooth out the threats and difficulties to the present world wide political arrangement.

But there is hope, as Isaiah clearly shows in the context of his prophecy:—

"Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty — — —"
(Is. 33:17)

"— — — thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation,
a tabernacle that shall not be taken down — — —."
(verse 20)

"For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the
Lord is our king; he will save us."
(verse 22)



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.

As the guidance and help of the Almighty is felt in our ecclesial and personal lives, gratitude is felt by each for this great blessing.

The annual Sunday School outing was held on Saturday, August 13th, amidst ideal weather and peaceful surroundings. The games and other recreation were enjoyed by the children and also by the grown ups.

The witness to His Word continues through correspondence received. It is indeed a privilege to be allowed this work.

Our hearts and prayers are united with our brethren in the on-going work in Manchester. *J.A. DeF.*

“PENTRIP” Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread: Sundays 11.30 a.m.

Bible Class: Midweek:

We were glad to be able to be present at the Manchester Fraternal Gathering at the end of August.

Interesting contacts have been made here with various ones from Nottingham and Dartford. We are pleased to do whatever we can as opportunity presents to bear witness to the truth.

(per D.L.)

Manchester, Ryecroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, Manchester.

Breaking of Bread: Sudays 11.30 a.m.

Young People's Class: Sundays 2.00 p.m.

Bible Class: Thursdays 7.30 p.m.

It is with a feeling of gratitude that we find in the difficulties of these times the evident unity seen in the comfort and support of the brethren and sisters scattered abroad.

The fraternal gathering was a source of strength and a further evidence of the unity of the fellowship.



