

NOVEMBER 1983

A Monthly Magazine issued by

The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of
Papal and Protestant Christendom

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"

"AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD"

"WATCH"

"AT A FRATERNAL GATHERING" (PARTS 1-3)

"SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD"

"NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS"

All Communications

Butterfield
15 Shrigley Rd. North
Higher Poynton
Cheshire
SK12 1TE

J. A. DeFries
R.D.1. Forestville,
New York 14062
U.S.A.

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

THE PEACE OF GOD

How often we are permitted to benefit from the words of Paul. We remember that of the twenty-seven books in the New Testament, fourteen are letters written by him to his brethren for help—to strengthen, to encourage them in their struggle to obey God. In this connection God's words to Ananias when he healed Paul of his blindness come to mind:

“ . . . He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.”
Acts 9:15.

Truly Paul was a chosen vessel, one who fully and faithfully emptied himself on behalf of his brethren and sisters; an example in giving his strength and finally his life for the name of God. His words are a particular help in our struggle to honor the same God of Israel.

An example of this help from God through Paul is found in Colossians 3:15 where he exhorts:

“ . . . Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.”

What is the “peace of God” which is to rule in our hearts? The word comes from a root meaning to join, and is used as quietness, rest, to set at one again. Peace is an essential gift from God, for Paul in almost all his letters speaks of that gift, often in conjunction with God's grace. For example, these words are in his letter to the Colossians:

“To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Colossians 1:2.

Through these words, we perceive that true peace can only come from God and His Son, and can be known only by those who are called to be the saints and faithful brethren in Christ. Paul wrote of His work:

“ . . . having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; . . .
And you, that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled . . .”
Colossians 1:20-21.

Paul himself had been an enemy, alienated from God; but by the power of the Spirit had become converted, reconciled, and able to give of himself to strengthen his brethren. To *reconcile* comes from a root meaning to change, and implies a thorough altering from that which had been. Is not this the work of Christ—to change a people from what they have been to what God wants them to be—from a man of flesh to a man of spirit—from the old man to a new creature born of the Spirit? How can this miraculous change be brought about? Paul tells us “by the blood of his cross”—by the death of the Son of God in obedience to His Father. What is the result of reconciliation, of being so thoroughly changed? Paul has told us that Jesus “*made peace*” through the blood of his cross.” So the result of reconciliation is peace with God. Our brother also makes this very clear:

“For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition . . .”

Ephesians 2:14.

How was this done? When Jesus died, the veil of the temple was rent, and the way into the most holy place was opened for those who are joined to Him as members of His Body. By this act of obedience, of submission, He provided meditation between His brethren and His Father; and, thus made redemption possible, bringing peace.

Further, we read that He:

“ . . . came and *preached peace* to you which were afar off,
and to them that were nigh.

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

Ephesians 2:17-18.

Can we discern how important that peace must have been in the eyes of God, that He sent His Son to bring it about, to restore that which had been lost in the garden of Eden? Can we grasp the mercy, the love revealed—a complete changing from alienation and enmity to oneness and peace? So we perceive that Paul’s words which we have read are a vital exhortation to lead us to salvation:

“Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also we are called in one body; and be ye thankful.”

Colossians 3:15.

The word *rule* is only used in this one place, and has the thought of an umpire, an arbitrator. Its root is used as *prize*—an award for getting the victory, given by one who is judging or arbitrating. Paul uses it in this sense:

“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.”

I Corinthians 9:24.

The *prize* is awarded to the one who has been judged to have been the victor. Is this what Paul had in mind when he said, “Let the peace of God rule (win the victory) in your hearts”? We know that to win a race requires a rigorous period of training, of persistent exercise to be in the right condition to win; and, in addition, an extreme effort put forth in the race itself. Paul continues to help us as we are called to this race:

“I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I,
not as one that beateth the air:

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection:
lest that by any means, when I have preached to others,
I myself should be a castaway.”

I Corinthians 9:26-27.

If Paul trembled lest he lose the hope of reconciliation, must we not fear lest that prize be lost to us? How can there be an enduring unto the end of that struggle, Brethren and Sisters? Paul makes it clear that it is only by keeping under our body and its fleshly thinking. When our natural inclination is to satisfy our fleshly delights, or even the temporal pre-occupation, there must be a resolve to keep the mind upon the hope of victory, and on the continuous daily occupation in this race for eternal life. It is significant that the words used for *keep under* are not the usual ones. They are made up of two words—*under* and *eye*. The concordance gives the thought of striking in the eye to disable an adversary. Isn't that thought appropriate to help us in our struggle to put down our adversary, the flesh? The eye can be an adversary as it looks with desires to the things which please the flesh. The instruction of the Spirit to counter this is:

“The light of the body is the eye; therefore when thine eye is single (turned only to God—the source of all light), thy whole body also is full of light;

but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.”

Luke 11:34.

Thus we are helped to see the need to keep under the flesh—in essence, to strike this adversary in the eye and disable it! Only so can our eye become single and fasten upon God and the prize which will be granted to those who are victors.

“LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED”

As we realize the need for help in the determination to allow the peace of God to rule in our hearts, we think of Jesus' words to His sad and troubled disciples as they thought of His departure and death:

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” John 24:27.

Jesus gave peace through His anguished victory in conquering the flesh, His adversary. How different is this peace from Jesus as we compare it with the peace which the world seeks by political means, by demonstrations, by disarmament, by nuclear forces as deterrents. His peace is the result of love—God's love for His creature, and Jesus' love for His Father and His brethren. As essential to that peace, Jesus admonished, “Let not your heart be troubled.” How we would like always to do that. The word *troubled*, turmoil, being roiled up as water that is agitated or stirred up. With a heart that is agitated, can the peace of God rule there? Can that gift of the Almighty flourish and grow in the midst of turmoil?

Unfortunately each one of us is naturally inclined under stress and uncertainty to be troubled and agitated. However, if we are resolved that the peace from our Father *will* rule over our own desires, if we value it above all else as the prize toward which we work, will not this determination and self-imposed discipline help to subdue that fretting and confusion which is inherent to each one of us? We perceive this from Jesus' words:

“Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say?
Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour.” John 12:27.

Jesus' own desire was to avoid the suffering and trial He knew lay ahead, but He recognized that this hour of trial was placed upon Him by His Father. While His soul may have been agitated, in a turmoil, we can see what overruled, for He continued:

“Father, glorify thy name . . .” Verse 28.

His whole resolve was to give honor to His Father by submitting to what *He* required.

In confirmation of this, we bring to mind His words:

“I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” John 17:4.

Can we not be sustained by His example, Brethren and Sisters, in our resolve to put down that turmoil and agitation which can hinder our finding the peace His Word can bring? The One who died to be the means of peace can understand our struggle to bring our hearts into subjection, and so can mediate for us "with groanings which cannot be uttered."

"BE YE THANKFUL"

Going back to Colossians 3:15, Paul here adds the injunction, "Be ye thankful." How important it is that we *are* thankful as we perceive the power and the mercy of God, so evident and providently shown to us. It is providing the means of peace which is to rule our hearts. Perception can bring true thankfulness: not just words, but in thought and in action. Don't we need at times to sit back and reflect upon all that He has granted—a hope, a body, a mediator, a sure means of peace now and of reconciliation? When it is realized that this peace is possible only to a few called out to be members of that one body, do we determine more resolutely to allow that peace to rule in our hearts? This was Paul's prayer as he wrote:

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, . . .
Make you perfect in every good work to do his will,
working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight . . ."
Hebrews 13:20-21.

What an uplifting and inspiring help are these words. Sincere and acceptable thanksgiving can only come as a heart becomes overwhelmed by the magnitude of His mercy; and, consequently, is ruled by the living desire to cling to and follow after the One who is the means of that peace.

J.A.DeF.



"WATCH"

The words recorded in Mark give the Lord Jesus' answer to Peter, James, John and Andrew who asked privately in the 13th chapter of Jesus' second coming:

"Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?"

verse 4

Jesus answered their question as He spoke of many things which will exist at that time; wars and rumour of wars, kingdoms rising against each other, earthquakes, famine and great troubles. Yet a direct answer to their question was not given. In the 32nd verse of this 13th chapter Jesus said:

"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels who are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

and verse 33,

"Take heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is."

A reasonable question by four of Jesus' disciples, and the answer can serve as a source of help to us as well, as we look to the return of the Lord Jesus and the conditions that will exist at that time. The fact that the exact time of Jesus' return is not told is perhaps in God's mercy, for if we knew, we would perhaps delay in doing all we know we should to make ourselves right before His presence. No man knows the hour, not Jesus, nor the angels but God alone. As we look to that day and hope to take part in those events, Jesus tells us in the 33rd verse:

"Take heed, watch and pray"

Jesus goes on with a parable of a man going on a journey who left his porter with the instructions to watch for the master's return:

"For the Son of man is like a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye, therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning;

Lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch". (verses 34-37).

This parable can easily relate to us, for as we are given responsibilities, we are commanded "to watch", and we are expected to be judged on those things we have done or not done. Jesus' concern was not just for His disciples, but for all as He said in the 37th verse, "And what I say unto you I say *unto all*, Watch".

That word "watch" means to be sleepless, to keep awake, aware, or having our senses exercised by all around us. Are we watchful of those things that God has told us to do? God gives to every man a work, and commands that all be faithful porters being watchful and aware. Perhaps it helps us to go to Matthew where we read of the parable of the five wise and five foolish virgins:

"Then shalt the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them;

But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.

And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

But the wise answered, saying, Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; but go rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

Watch, therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of man cometh." verses 1-13.

How important a lesson is brought out here, the need to have oil always in our lamps.

The oil being the Word of God, close at hand, using it in a way that we will be found prepared and watching as were the five wise virgins. When the bridegroom came, they were watchful, ready and so they went in with Him and the door was closed to all others. They were not only anticipating His return, but were prepared for it.

As we go to the record in John chapter 10:1 we see another example of the relationship of Christ and His followers as compared to a Shepherd and His sheep:

Verily, verily I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice.

And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.” John 10:1-5

His sheep or followers know His voice, they are not deceived by a stranger. What would prevent this deception? Being in close daily contact with their shepherd, knowing His voice, His ways, anticipating His arrival they would not be fooled by an imposter. Jesus goes on in the 7th verse of this chapter to enlarge upon this parable:

“ . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them.

verse 10

The thief cometh not but to steal and to kill, and to destroy; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

His followers hear His voice, watch and pray for His coming, and know what is required to prepare for that event. Watch, be not sleeping, pray, or as that word means, to put thoughts ahead, looking forward to the time when all will be accomplished in God's plan. Solomon in Proverbs 8:34 speaks of that blessing to be bestowed in that final day:

“Blessed is the man who heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord.”

This is the hope and great blessing for those found watching. It is hard to watch and be mindful of all God requires us to do. David speaks in Psalm 102 of circumstances which apply to us as well:

“Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee. Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me; in the day when I call, answer me speedily.”

Is this the prayer of one who is watching? As the 7th verse goes on to say:

“I watch, and am like a sparrow alone upon the housetop.”

How often we may find ourselves alone as we strive in times of affliction and trial to watch. But if we can heed God’s teaching and be watchful and prayerful as David was, help can be given and a strengthening granted. As in Psalm 127 a song of degrees we learn:

“Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”

This speaks of the need to separate the thinking of the flesh and the spirit. We cannot allow our thinking to get in the way of God’s plan for us. We need to be sensitive and allow ourselves to be led by God. At times we find ourselves sorely tried for God is probing our lacks and deficiencies and it is at that time that we must cry out for His help and be aware of the needs which must be filled in us. Let us remember Jesus’ words to us “And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.”

M.C.S.



AT A FRATERNAL GATHERING (Part 1)

TRUE DOCTRINE

First of all, perhaps we should consider what doctrine means. The Greek word is—DIDASKALIA, that is, 'instruction' or 'teaching'. True doctrine therefore, in the profound meaning of the term, is the true teaching or instruction of God who is the source of all truth. The Bible of course, is the truth of God. But that does not mean that all who praise and respect the Bible are purveyors of true doctrine. There are many warnings in the scripture concerning pseudo doctrine, which though giving instruction, is not in fact the message of God.

“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.” (Eph.4:3-4)

This doctrine of the one body and the one hope goes on to say:-

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” (Eph. 4:14-16)

This is, and must be, true doctrine. The fault arises when men twist the scripture to make out another interpretation of it than was divinely intended. As soon as this procedure commences, teachings and slants of all kinds of ideas of men, begin to be “tossed to and fro”, which in effect is debate. This in turn hides or covers what is the true doctrine. As every “wind” of instruction blows upon people who have an interest in the word of God, they begin to wonder what is the truth, and this is virtually the same as admitting they do not know what the truth is.

This situation is not, indeed cannot, be a “speaking (of) the truth in love”, for how can there be growth if there is nothing real to grow upon?

True doctrine is a reality! The ‘winds of doctrine’ (subject to change like the wind) are unrealities, though they may seem real

enough in the minds of those who receive such things. The importance of having true doctrine cannot be over emphasised. The urgency of the warning of the Spirit is unmistakable:-

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;
Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;”
(1 Timothy 4:1-2)

To Timothy it was said:-

“Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.”
(verse 16)

The implication of such an exhortation, which certainly was not merely intended for Timothy a fellow worker in the truth, is that in having the true doctrine, one and all have to stand their ground on its behalf, otherwise one and all are lost. There must be “a continuance”, for true doctrine is unchangeable. It can only be said that where people of God have had to change their view through failure of understanding on what they have previously thought was an important doctrinal point, the fact that they have not really changed the doctrine, but rather they did not have it in that particular aspect in the first place. This of course is not a going into error, but rather a coming out of error. True doctrine therefore, is infallibly unchanging in its spiritual teaching; but men who are so very fallible fail to discern and uphold what God has given. This is not God’s fault. He has given much warning and guidance against falling into error; and furthermore He really has purposed to preserve His truth, His doctrine, amongst a few of His creatures, even to these last days.

To have, and to uphold true doctrine, therefore, is the means of being saved; but certainly such a position gives no licence for boasting of a privileged position. But rather to have concern lest error, through deception, finds its way to overthrow sound understanding of the truth and so cause to be fulfilled what has been solemnly warned against:-

“Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.
Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

“For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”
(2 John verses 8-11)

These words relate to fellowship, and are not so radical as to require refusal to discuss with those with error. But are to show that if wrong teaching is allowed “inside” this can only be to the detriment of the hope of life, and of course of unity (fellowship) with God.

D.L.



AT A FRATERNAL GATHERING (Part 2)

MY DOCTRINE SHALL DROP AS THE RAIN

There could not be a better figure to illustrate God's kindness in the proclamation of His Truth to those who will hear when He (God) said :-

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, — — —." (Deut. 32:2)

God sends the gentle rain to irrigate the earth in order that plant life might grow and that the ground will bring forth vegetation, whereby mankind can enjoy the variety of food that it yields. But rain can take all sorts of forms—light rain or drizzle, or heavy rain with hail stones.

In some countries hail can be as large as golf balls bringing devastating results, killing even man himself, were he to be out in such a storm. It would be this kind of hail that was experienced during the plague of hail which punished Pharaoh and his followers of old. Because of the severity of that hail Pharaoh temporarily submitted. As we know there were ten plagues all together, but none of them having any lasting effect upon those chastened thereby, and so came the final destruction witnessed as the waters of the Red Sea closed upon Pharaoh and his host.

When rain first falls after a long dry spell, the earth gives off a very refreshing perfume which is most descriptive. Therefore, just as it is in the natural, so it is in the spiritual, so we read:

"Behold I give you good doctrine."

True doctrine is to have the same gentleness as the light rain, bringing about responsiveness and growth in individuals, not having too much of it at any one time, but rather a gradual yet sure effect. Christ Himself received this same doctrine, and therefore understanding, in the same way, and so on one occasion, while still young He was found discussing with the doctors in the temple, who were astonished at His doctrine.

My speech shall distil as the dew

It is not the intention to deal with all the technicalities of distillation, except to say that the purpose of distillation is to condense a more solid substance into globules of water. Dew is always formed during the night, but the process is not really noticed in the fullest sense until the morning when the bright sparkling drops

of dew are on the tip of each blade of grass. Is there not here a further object lesson which God wishes us to learn? Are not those things which are to be learned from scriptures to be received during the night, ultimately bringing about a shining result on the servant of God, reflecting His spirit when the morning comes (the morning without clouds). Then the saints will be seen in all their glory, having received the blessing of God as reward for obedience and righteousness. Only the few will receive this blessing, those who are worthy through Christ.

There are of course those who, sadly enough, will not endure sound doctrine even though they may appear sincere in their own beliefs. This is because they prefer what apparently is an easier way, which is to the satisfying of the creature rather than a true worship of the Creator.

Even the scribes and Pharisees (strict disciplinarians) were of this category, who taught for commandments the doctrines of men, and would not endure sound doctrine, for which they were strongly condemned. They laid heavy burdens grievous to be borne, on others. Christ said to them:

“Ye are of your father the devil. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him.”

The question that arises is, can such a people, whether then or now, have any hope of salvation? Or can anyone who departs from the Truth and becomes a member of any apostate body be one of Christ's brethren? Surely the answer is in the negative. In what way then should we respond to the doctrine which drops as the rain? Christ's answer is very clear:

“Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for my yoke is easy (gentle) and my burden is light.”

Anyone who wishes to respond to such an invitation will treat the Truth respectfully and will not be carried about every wind of doctrine, but continue in the things which they have learned (the doctrine dropping as the rain) which will make wise unto salvation.

We are told in Deuteronomy 11:13-17 that God would send the rain in due season. But eventually because of disobedience this was withheld and so Israel were punished in this way to cause them to remember their former state from which they had fallen, which in the continuance of decline could only mean death. A downfall brought about through not adhering to sound doctrine (the doctrine that drops as the rain). Any idea (then or now) that once a brother, always a brother was and is completely false.

In conclusion let us consider the words of Paul who says in 2 Timothy 3:14-17:-

“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and has been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for corection, for instruction in righteousness.

“That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

W.G.B.



AT A FRATERNAL GATHERING (Part 3)

“SPEAK THOU THE THINGS WHICH BECOME SOUND DOCTRINE”

“Paul a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;
To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.” (Titus 1:1 & 4)

When the Apostle wrote these words to Titus he knew the great responsibility which had been laid upon him, as shown in his epistle to the Corinthians in chapter 9 verse 16 of the First epistle:

“For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!”

With the full realisation that even after all his efforts there was a possibility that he himself might be a castaway.

“But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” (verse 27)

Paul then must have had these things in mind when he wrote to Titus:-

“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;
But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;” (Titus 1:2-3)

The whole chapter is one of instruction and exhortation and is followed up in chapter 2 verse 1:-

“But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.”

What then is sound doctrine? The word doctrine really means teaching or instruction—i.e. the substance of teaching and instruction, perhaps put more explicitly in verse 7 and 8:-

“In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."

Sound speech that cannot be condemned—and surely sound speech is truth, and you cannot have any speech more sound than the truth.

In Proverbs 4 verses 1 and 2 we read:-

"Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law."

So we see that the law was the substance of sound doctrine. Hence the further instruction in verse 4:-

" — — — keep my commandments and live."

Commandments, divine commandments, contain the essence of sound doctrine i.e. the substance of divine instruction.

The words given so long ago to the children of Israel must have their application for us, and are most powerful:-

"This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgements: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart and with all thy soul.

Thou has avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice: And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all his commandments;

And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest, be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken." (Deut. 26:16-19)

And so the instruction is, speak thou the things which become sound doctrine. Why the need for this? Do we get the answer in verse 2 of Titus chapter 2?

"That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate sound in faith, in charity (love), in patience.

The aged women likewise — — —."

Why then this warning, especially to the aged? Is it because there is a danger—a grave danger of becoming complacent and of forgetting the first principles of the Truth? We are reminded in this

chapter that Christ gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people. Do we get the meaning of this, can we grasp what the Apostle is telling us? that everyone who fails to give heed to this exhortation is lost, and that Christ has died in vain for such, the whole work of Christ on their behalf—His life—His obedience to God—His sufferings—His sacrifice and His teaching of sound doctrine are nullified if we do not give heed to speak sound doctrine, for in so doing, i.e. giving heed to sound doctrine, we uphold the precepts laid down by the Almighty, His statutes, His commandments and His judgments, and thereby glorify the great God of heaven.

J.S.



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

“ — — — Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old — — —. The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might — — —.” (Micah 7:14-16)

The above words are in context with the reminder of the divine promise:-

“Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.” (Micah 7:20)

It is not to be wondered at then, that in the Jewish New Year interview the Israeli Defence Minister on the Israel State Radio said Israel intended eventually to annex the Jordan West Bank. He said the region would not be absorbed at once because of Israel's obligations under the 1978 Camp David agreements (in which the U.S.A. participated).

But after that, Israel sovereignty would have to be applied.

Explaining more specifically he said that a Palestinian state was already in existence in Jordan, and the government there had no claim to Judea and Samaria; the ancient description of what is now referred to as the West Bank. Pointedly he said, “There are no nation states in the Middle East. There is a Syria and an Iraq or a Lebanon all because of lines drawn on the map during World War One.” “There was no Syria or Iraq before that. Is there a Jordanian people? These lines determined Palestine. Palestine is the territory assigned by the League of Nations as the British Mandate in order to set up a Jewish State.

This territory includes Israel within the green line (Israel's border prior to the 1967 Israel-Arab war), Judea and Samaria, Gaza and all of Trans-Jordan.” “If there is a Palestinian people it is the Arabs who live in this territory and their descendants. Therefore, Jordan is a Palestinian state. There is no Jordanian nation. When was it born? Where did it come from?

Continuing, this important member of Israel's Government explained that a Palestinian state on the West Bank of the Jordan would present a security threat to Israel's future, for any Arab sovereignty in Judea or Samaria (the West Bank) however benign in appearance would ultimately make way for the Palestinian Guerilla Liberation Organisation, so bringing an armed state into a very close proximity of Israel's eastern border.

Those who reconsider the history of Israel in its broader aspect, are bound to feel the good reason in this outspoken statement. That a settled territory has not yet been achieved in this, its fullest sense, by Israel, and so bring it back to the dimensions of ancient times, is no reason to think that this cannot be. Indeed this must eventually be the outcome, for God has promised and declared it to be so:-

“Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead (Jordan), as in the days of old — — —. The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might.”

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.

The message received from the Manchester Fraternal Gathering was a source of joy and encouragement to us, conveying a closeness of mind and spirit.

Encouraging us to press on is the steadfast help and direction of God given as we strive to wait on Him in all aspects of our ecclesial lives.

J.A.DeF.

“PENTRIP” Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread: Sundays 11.30 a.m.

Bible Class: Midweek:

We in our sometimes weakness and difficulty wonder what is in store in the immediate future. But the anchor to us is the sure hope of Truth which means security for ever.

per D.L.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, Manchester

Breaking of Bread: Sundays 11.30 a.m.

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

Bible Class: Thursdays 7.30 p.m.

There is much to encourage us in the unity of mind and purpose both far and near, which is of great help as we pass through difficulties and trying circumstances.

Perhaps we do not always value the unity for what it is, for this is the Hallmark of the Truth.

Correction:- re September magazine Page 161, article “To profit withal” Called out to the world should be altered to—called out of the world.