

MAY 1985

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

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All Communications

W. G. Butterfield
Plot 157 Thames Drive
Biddulph,
Staffs.,
ST8 7HL

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

At the Table of the Lord

“. . . THAT YOUR JOY MAY BE FULL . . .”

This morning we have listened to one who was very close to Jesus, the Apostle John. He wrote these words about 60 years after his Lord's death:

“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you . . .”
I John 1:3.

What a privilege then we receive from our Brother John. To declare — comes from a word which is often used as angel or messenger — one who brings tidings from God. What was this message written and preserved for almost nineteen hundred years for all those who wait in hope? What had John seen and heard and handled? Was it the teaching of Jesus, the miracles he had done, the joy of being in His presence, the sadness of His death, the gladness known again at His resurrection? But was it not also the trials and sufferings which came upon him and all his brethren for the name of Jesus? It was too, the destruction of Jerusalem, foretold by Jesus, due to the rebellion of God's people. All this and much more John wanted to declare unto his brethren. Why was this such a strong desire? He tells us:

“. . . that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”
I John 1:3.

How can these things of which John speaks enhance this holy fellowship — with John, with Jesus, and through Jesus, with God? First of all, we would ask — what is fellowship? The word has the meaning to share. From this same word is derived colony — a group of people sharing a common purpose and working together for the common good. It is sometimes used as companion, partner, partaker, and communicator, giving us the idea of being closely joined together. It was John's desire to convey the message we are reading today. A message to us, and to all his brethren, that all might hope and work to be partners, sharers with him, and as the rest of verse 3 tells us:

“. . . with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

How can this be, this holy joining together with one another, with Jesus, and with our Father? Looking back to Jesus' prayer

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for His brethren, can help us. He asked His Father, speaking for His own:

“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: . . .
And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:
I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one;”
John 17:21-23.

“The glory . . . I have given them.” What was this glory Jesus received of His Father and bestowed upon His brethren, which would make them one? Paul helps us:

“But we all, with open (reflecting) face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”
II Corinthians 3:18.

Can we understand this? James gives us more help to comprehend that glory. He begins:

“. . . be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only . . .”
James 1:22.

What is the difference between a doer and a hearer only? A hearer is:

“. . . like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.”
Verses 23 and 24.

He beholds his natural or “genesis” face in a mirror; this reveals to him his “born-with” face; his nature is shown to be sinful, needing redemption. Having observed this through the mirror of God’s word, but being a hearer only and not a doer, he goes his own way, failing to change. He quickly forgets what has been shown to him through God’s word. What causes him to forget this vital manifestation? Is it because something of self is more important to him? James goes on to explain about a doer of the word — a contrast:

“. . . whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty (which can free us from the old, ‘genesis’ man), and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” James 1:25.

Now, returning to II Corinthians 3:18 —

“. . . we all, with open (or reflecting) face beholding as in

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a glass (His Word) the glory of the Lord," may be "changed into the same image . . . by the Spirit of the Lord."

Changed also means transfigured, as Jesus was on the mount. We remember that John was there, and now he declares it unto us. We may be transformed also by looking and growing in that word, seeing there and reflecting One who gave perfect glory to God. If there is a striving to be doers of what is perceived there in His perfect law, we may hope to be made like unto Him. How did Jesus attain; how did He know perfect fellowship with His Father? He tells us:

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

His life was given in complete and loving obedience, accomplishing what God required of Him. Thus He is worthy and sits at God's right hand in unmarred fellowship. Now we may better understand why Jesus prayed:

". . . the glory which thou gavest me (He saw it in His Father's word and care) I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:" John 17: 22.

It is likely then that John had seen in a great measure that glory and hope in God's word, as he later wrote this epistle to us and all his brethren:

"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." I John 1:3.

Shall we not then, Brethren and Sisters, receive that which John declares, perceiving through his message what we are like naturally? And shall we not more earnestly strive to become transformed to what God would have us be — what Jesus was — what John gave his whole life to become — a man of spirit, with the flesh put away? If so, we may be permitted to know John's fellowship and be partakers with him and with Jesus Himself, for in this great work is seen how He glorified God. If we can crucify our flesh, putting its natural desire to death, we can know this hope. It is not easy to mortify fleshly desires, our yearnings our ambitions, our "needs". We would not expect it to be easy, for it was not easy for the Lord Jesus who agonized to conquer it. Peter's words help us:

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“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers (fellowshippers) of Christ’s suffering; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.” I Peter 4:12-13.

How hard it is to rejoice in the midst of painful trials, but if we realize it is a step in the hard struggle to become partakers, fellowshippers, of Christ’s suffering, will it not help us to accept and even rejoice — looking to the end of that “perfect law of liberty”?

When Jesus’ time of probation was over He could say, “I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” Let us during our proving time determine that we, too, will agonize to complete whatever the Almighty requires, glad indeed of the opportunity given to glorify our Father. John continues to help us—he knew how great is our need:

“. . . these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.” I John 1:4.

John was a messenger so that we might know fullness of joy; this means as much joy as it is possible to have. If we can be true hearers and doers, this joy will come about when Jesus returns to gather together those whom He knows have laboured to glorify God. He helps us to see this in the parable of the talents. To those who had gainfully used the goods which their master entrusted to them, it was said:

“Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Matthew 25:21.

A life of seeking gain for our Lord as good stewards, a life of joining in fellowship with Jesus and with those who are His in this work, can bring these joyful, these longed-for words — the culmination of all our struggles to exalt the Father. What ineffable delight and pleasure to hope for! Joy in the mind of the Almighty because of a faithful remnant—a people whom He has preserved; joy also in the heart of the Lord Jesus, as His Bride is united to Him for eternity; and joy unspeakable in the hearts of those who will know this great blessing.

David was one who lived by and for this hope. He worked determinedly to bring his life into conformity with what his Father required. His words express this mind of the “Sweet

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Psalmist", and we can perceive too in them the hope and determination of the greater Son of David. Let us listen:

"I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope."
Psalms 16:8-9.

What was that hope?

"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (the grave); neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."
Verse 10.

David believed, and surely this was Jesus' conviction which enabled Him "for the joy set before him" to endure the cross and dispise the shame. David's faith again shines forth:

"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."
Verse 11.

What greater joy than to abide in His presence and know His fellowship forever. John's purpose in declaring these things which he had seen and heard was that we might have that fellowship and know that fulness of joy without end. At this prospect, our minds go back to the time of Nehemiah. When the work of rebuilding the wall was finished with the help of God's hand, the people were assembled. Ezra, the priest, then

". . . brought the law before the congregation . . . and all that could hear with understanding . . . And he read therein . . . from the morning until midday, . . . and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law."
Nehemiah 8:2-3.

Further, we are told:

"So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand . . ."
Verse 8.

Was the reading of the word of God, as James has recorded, like a mirror showing to each of our brethren, "what manner of man" he was? Perhaps we can discern this by Nehemiah's words:

". . . mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law."
Verse 9.

They wept because of their failure to keep the law. They began to realize what manner of people they were. This would help them not to be "forgetful hearers." So he, as John did, "declared" unto them:

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“ . . . This day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry;
for the joy of the Lord is your strength.” Verse 10.

The law revealed to them their failure, but also their hope — that they could “enter into the joy of (their) Lord.”

Can we then, Brethren and Sisters, from these things brought as a message from God unto us, resolve that we will try to be more fully partakers, sharing in holiness with John, with Jesus, with one another, and with the Father in this promise of eternal fellowship and joy in His glory?

J.A.Def.



Prayer and Fasting

When we study about the ministry of the Lord Jesus, we are impressed by the great numbers of people who constantly followed Him. It seemed wherever He went there was a multitude which travelled close behind, waiting to hear what He would say. The individuals in this throng were varied and so were their reasons for being there. And as would naturally follow, so was the perception of each one hearing the lessons taught by Jesus. Jesus had only one motive in mind, and that was, that whoever had an ear to hear, would embrace the gospel of the Kingdom of God, and His place in it. Perhaps we can be helped to bolster our faith and belief by these lessons taught by Jesus.

In the 9th chapter of Mark as Jesus descended from the mount after the transfiguration, He was immediately engulfed in a debate between His disciples and the scribes. As there was a great multitude listening to them, Jesus immediately seized upon this opportunity to teach. We read of this circumstance in Mark 9:14-18:

“And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed and, running to him, saluted him. And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?
And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, who hath a dumb spirit; And wherever he taketh him, he teareth him; and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away. And I spake to thy disciples, that they should cast him out, and they could not.”

The scribes must have been questioning the disciples' inability to heal this child. Because of the disciples' lack, the scribes then seized upon this opportunity to discredit Jesus through them. But why could they not cure this boy? They had healed others — those with leprosy, the blind and lame. In Matthew 17:17 an account of this same incident reveals Jesus' perception of that audience He was to speak to:

“. . . O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? Bring him hither to me.
And Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour.”

Here was the key to the disciples' inability to heal. The multitude who were listening, did so as well without faith in the things they were hearing from Jesus. "How long shall I suffer you? — Jesus was disturbed that there was no perception to His teaching. He realized how lacking they were in faith and belief. In the record in Mark 9:20, Jesus' question to the child's father contains the essence of His teaching that he hoped to pass on to the multitude listening:

"Jesus said unto him, (the father) If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."

The father's reply perhaps illustrates a problem we all face at times, (verse 24):

"And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief,"

At times we may say we believe, but is it sufficient? The father of this child sought to have his belief sustained, needed strength and sought help from Jesus with tears.

Can we imagine being there among that multitude, knowing that the disciples could not heal this child, and seeing the wonderful act of healing that Jesus was able to perform? What an impression it should have made on that crowd. No doubt it did on some, for we read later that the disciples came to Him privately and asked: (verse 28)

"And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?"

A good question, no doubt the same as the scribes had put to the disciples earlier. Why? If we go back to the record of this circumstance in Matthew 17:20 we read Jesus' answer to them:

"And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief; for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove from here to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit, this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

Undoubtedly the disciples had faith and belief, but it seems in the intensity of that circumstance they were powerless. Were they so engulfed in the enormity of this child's sickness that they forgot the need for prayer and fasting to bolster their faith and belief? They perhaps were caught up in the heat of the moment, rather than retreating to prayer and fasting, giving glory and honour to God for the power He had granted to them.

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Fasting is a means of denying the flesh, a denial which is due to bring one closer to God. Jesus instructed His disciples about fasting in Matthew 6:16:

“Moreover, when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face, That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father, who is in secret; and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.”

We see the importance of fasting as explained by Jesus, not an outward show, but an inner expression of the heart to God. We read in Isaiah 58:3-5 regarding fasting and what it is God looks for in this exercise of denying the flesh:

“Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.

Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness; ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?”

Can we see from these verses how the flesh interferes with the purpose of fasting — a fast for all to see and sympathise with, “what a righteous man”, would be the comments of the onlookers. But in Isaiah 58: 6-7 is pointed out what the spirit looks for in one who fasts:

“Is not this the fast that I have chosen — to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?”

The fasting that the Spirit approves of is actually the cutting off of our flesh — a denial of our selfish motives, a dedication to serving others so coming closer to God by becoming more spiritual in nature.

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Jesus through this type of prayer and fasting was able to heal the child while His disciples could not. They needed yet to learn, as do we, that to strengthen our faith and belief in trial and testing, we must turn to God in prayer and fasting — communicating with Him while spiritually denying our flesh.

This has to become our whole living, not just when pressed by trial and difficulty, but at all times drawing close to God in prayer asking for His help and strength to carry on. And to fast effectively, spiritually, is to cut off our flesh nature, walking in a spiritual way. If we can pray and fast in this manner, God will be well pleased, and has promised this end to those who can: (Isaiah 58:14)

“Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob, thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

M.C.S.



The Adversary

We read:---

“Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord.” (Job 2:1)

The adversary was in the midst. God, however, we see, was in communication with the froward, in verses 2-3:—

“And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.”

To the adversary help therefore was extended, if that adversary would receive it. The help and the exhortation given to the froward was in this example, to consider the example of Job. But we also see that the adversary was very typical of many adversaries, who have been present amongst the Ecclesias even to these last days. The question asked of the adversary was “whence comest thou?” There was no straight answer, only a shuffle in the reply, “From going to and fro in the earth — from walking up and down in it.” Which left the matter open that the adversary could have come from any place and was not to be pinpointed and held down to the question.

How oft during the long history of the Truth has this trait been seen. Moving to and fro, going up and down, it is the sign of the adversary. The adversary we see from Job chapter 2 was prepared to challenge God, as, in effect, all adversaries do. Job's integrity was not acceptable to the adversary; he must still find fault, and this could only be that he wanted to bring Job down.

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“And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.
But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.
And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.”
(verses 4-6)

It is not that God is unjust that He allows infliction to fall upon His people, such as Job, because of the adversary. There is a sublime purpose behind it all. The record says in verse 7:—

“So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown”.

It was not that the adversary actually was able to give Job boils, for the Satan had already admitted that it was in the power of the hand of God to do this thing. What is implied, is that this extreme trial upon Job, which God allowed, was brought about by the adversary's evil untoward work. As a result God brought, and allowed this further test upon Job, as part of the divine work of placing upon record, for subsequent generations the object lesson and teaching of the patience of Job.

Reading on we find in verses 8-10:—

“And he took a potsherd to scrape himself withal, and he sat down among the ashes.

Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God and die.

But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.”

Job's wife was faltering; death would remove him from his misery and pain, but what a dreadful end to meet death at the hand of the Lord. What foolish advice was this. It was better to endure pain and misery, however great, if there could be ultimate deliverance, forgiveness, healing and life from God, rather than death at God's hand for rebellious blasphemy. Job not only helped himself, he helped his wife when he expounded that gem of reasoning and of wisdom:

“What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?”

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Tucked in amongst these words is the statement:—

“In all this did not Job sin with his lips.”

There is a lot of meaning in this phrase, which indicates that a struggle was obviously going on in the mind of Job, but which God was prepared to overlook. Job had sufficient control in that struggle that he did not allow wrong thoughts to emerge in wrong words from his lips. The evidence of the fight going on in the body of Job both mentally and physically is implied in the words of verse 12:—

“And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.”

Job was greatly changed in appearance by his sufferings, but what had helped and was still helping him was the thought:—

“ . . . shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?”

This is a necessary realisation, for when the curse fell upon man, it was because man chose the way of “the knowledge of good and evil”. When Adam disobeyed this brought evil along with good into the world; which, as we know, was so greatly experienced by the Lord Jesus Christ, which left its mark upon His countenance.

This chapter from the book of Job observes the action of those who called themselves friends of Job. They were ready to display an outward show of commiseration, rending their mantles and sprinkling dust upon their heads towards heaven. But was this outward show sincere? We note the words in verse 13:—

“So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.”

They were silent, they in effect refused to speak, excusing in their own minds their holding back because they saw that Job's grief was very great, which is how it could be expected to be in such circumstances. So from them is seen a display in certain mechanical aspects without a corresponding coming alongside by deeds and words. This is a questionable feature in any who are supposed to be friends. In Job's affliction, for all the rending of garments and sprinkling of dust upon heads, it was not the action of true friends. So for seven days and seven nights Job sat without

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a word from them as they waited for him to speak. Then Job had to arouse himself to make the effort to break the silence. Though if any had asked Eliphaz, Bildad or Zophar what was their intention, they would have said they had gone to help Job. No wonder they also ultimately proved to be adversaries of Job, having already made up their minds that he was to be condemned; and so when he began to speak were ready to challenge him in an endeavour to push him further down.

Yes, do not those things from long ago reveal what is in man? Show what can be expected from the adversary? Reveal that what is and has been experienced in the continuing history of the Truth, is part of the evil which has to be endured until that great day of vindication, which God, at the appointed time will reveal in His loving mercy, as in the case of Job.



“Nor taketh up a reproach against his Neighbour”

Psalm 15, v. 3.

IT is evident from the Psalms that the mind of David was ever considering the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God; and so we find him meditating:

“Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?” Psalm 15, v. 1.

The Spirit is quick to reply and to inform us,

“He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.” Verse 2.

Here we are shown some of the perfect characteristics of God Himself — characteristics which were exemplified in Christ, who truly walked uprightly, worked righteousness and spoke the truth in His heart, no matter what the cost.

An upright man is a godly man, a righteous man is a godly man and a godly man speaks the truth in his heart.

Of Job it is recorded:—

“. . . there is none like him in all the earth, a perfect man and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil. Job 1, v. 8.

Further we read,

“Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.”

“He that walketh uprightly **and** worketh righteousness **and** speaketh the truth in his heart”

What then, does it mean to work righteousness and to speak the truth in the heart?

A righteous man is one who does that which is right according to God’s commandments and never according to the dictates of his heart realising that the Spirit is most emphatic when it says.

“The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked — who can know it?”
Jer. 17, v. 9.

It needs the Spirit to search out the heart and search it does as we shall find in the following verses of Psalm 15.

. . . **nor doeth evil to his neighbour.**

“He that backbiteth **not** with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.”
Verse 3.

This is a warning for just as the Spirit tells us what we must do if we are to abide in His tabernacle, we are also told what we must not do, and whenever the Spirit warns it is always against the flesh — the fleshly nature which we all bear, and if not controlled will lead to an everlasting grave.

The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity — if uncontrolled, the natural mind loves to backbite, to speak behind another's back, and allow oneself to become elevated by degrading another. The world thrives in backbiting, it revels in it, but in the house of God it must not be so, for all are called to great glory, all are neighbours, i.e., near ones — and all are precious in His sight.

“Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones (near ones — neighbours).”
Matt. 18, v. 10.

“. . . for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.”

Can we now see why it is so important that there should be no backbiting — no pulling down — no such evil in the house of God — nor should a reproach be taken up against a neighbour.

Reproach is malicious slander — and when we realise this, we are more able to understand Psalm 69, v. 7.

“Because for thy sake I have borne reproach . . .” (verse 9).

“For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up, and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me,”

words which are taken up by the Apostle Paul when writing to the Romans, chapter 15, v. 2.

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“Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

For even Christ pleased not himself but, as it is written,

The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me”
(verse 3) and

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning” (verse 4).

Have we yet learned that we are to control our tongues, that we are not to backbite and speak evil of our brethren and sisters — that we are not to maliciously slander them, for where this prevails there cannot be unity, and without unity there cannot be peace.

The Spirit is alive, very much so, to these great weaknesses in our nature which are so destructive of unity and peace and in the mercy of God we are shown how to avoid the danger.

For malicious slander to take its toll requires two parties — the speaker and the hearer. Can we then not see how great is the responsibility placed upon the hearer as well as the speaker?

If wrong has been done and it becomes known, there is a correct way to deal with it as laid down in Matt. 18:

“Go and tell him between thee and him alone.”

If we give ear to anything malicious against our brethren and sisters we are wrong, we must not do it. The correct way is the Spirit way — Zech. 7, v. 9:

“Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother”;

Verse 10

“And let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.”

for to do so is to take up a reproach against his neighbour.

The upright man, who has learned the Spirit way is always anxious to make sure that he neither offends God nor man, and while speaking the truth in his heart will work righteousness and assure himself of a dwelling place in God's holy hill.

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

“. . . the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled:
I will do unto them after their way, and according to their
deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I am
the Lord.” (Ezekiel 7:27)

Who can say otherwise than Israel, though perhaps in its strongest position since the inception of its latter day State, is in trouble?

Israel's economy is in difficulty with an inflation rate of four hundred per cent and with the greatest debt per population ratio than any other country. It has supposedly compromised its political disunity with an agreed National Unity Government, but this is really in disarray due to the greatest economic crisis the country has experienced since 1948 when Israel was re-established as a Sovereign Power.

A short while ago a Budget designed to fight Israel's inflation and cut foreign debt was squashed through inter-party squabbling, thwarting the coalition's desire to quickly bring through the Knesset (Parliament) immediate measures to deal with the economic difficulties. This event immediately raised the doubt whether Israel's National Unity Government can continue much longer. Meanwhile the United States continues to have considerable interest in that area, following up proposals by Jordan and Egypt of talks for formulating peace with Israel, which Israel's leaders are prepared to go along with, without pre-conditions, so long as the P.L.O. (Palestinian Terrorists) are not involved.

So, though successful militarily, the “people of the land” are troubled; which as the prophetic word indicates, will continue to be experienced by them until the time when shall come to pass the fulfilment; that sure and permanent solution of their difficulties, which God has declared to be the ultimate event:—

“And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abomination thereof from thence.

THE REMNANT

And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you: and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.”

(Ezekiel 11: 18-20)



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.

Alternate Week: Revelation Study.

The news of Sister Williams' death brings sadness yet gratitude that she did not suffer a long illness and was able to enjoy her beloved Black Rock surroundings to the end. She now rests, awaiting the call to judgment. Can it be far off?

J.A.Def.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, M/cr.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 10.30 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 7.30 p.m.

We apologise for delay of the March and April issues. This has been due to circumstances beyond our control.

However, we now believe the difficulties have been resolved.