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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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**AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD
"COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE"**

As we continue our reading in Isaiah, much help is found to comfort and strengthen in our daily living, as well as in our struggles to conform to the will of our Father. This faithful prophet was sent to four kings of Judah — Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah — over a period of more than 60 years. He conveyed God's word to each, but only Hezekiah humbled himself sufficiently to receive and prosper through God's merciful provision. What gratitude Isaiah would experience to have been given this work, as well as the ability to carry God's message, and thereby help this king to honor and obey the Almighty, which brought him blessing.

That help is available to us as well, and so we listen to his words to Hezekiah, Judah and Jerusalem. God spoke to His prophet, directing him to:

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

Speak ye comfortably (to the heart) to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins."

Isaiah 40:1-2.

Jerusalem's warfare against the enemy, Assyria, had been accomplished as the siege of Jerusalem ended through God's power, and without any in Jerusalem having to lift a hand. Isaiah brought comfort to God's people, taking their minds forward to the future work of John the Baptist, of whom he spoke:

"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

Isaiah 40:3.

It was to be John's work to prepare the way for the coming of God's Son, Jesus, as the promised Messiah who would teach the gospel, the good news concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, through whom a place in that kingdom will be made possible for those who faithfully follow Him. The prophet spoke of this:

"And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."

Isaiah 40:5.

This is the end of God's purpose — the true comfort that He extends to all who willingly and valiantly struggle to serve Him.

Recently we have read again God's words to His people through Isaiah:

“Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: . . . Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem . . .”
Isaiah 52:1-2.

There is to be a time of awakening, of shaking oneself from the dust of the grave, when Jesus returns to judge those responsible, and to grant the beautiful garments of eternal life to those accounted acceptable. Indeed, it will be a time of comforting and rejoicing for those so blessed! This is our hope, Brethren and Sisters, to sustain us through the present days of trial and tribulation. The prophet added:

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.”
Isaiah 52:7, 9-10.

This, Brethren and Sisters, is our hope, the hope of Israel, of all who in love for Him and His Son dedicate their lives to His service, striving to put aside all the lusts of the flesh, as Isaiah exhorts:

“ . . . be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD . . .”
Isaiah 52:11.

“Vessels” gives the thought of something prepared for a work, as were the vessels of the altar in the tabernacle or temple of God. These vessels and the priests or Levites who bore them were sanctified, to become fit for such a holy work. In striving to be “a vessel . . . meet for the master’s use” (II Timothy 2:21), we also must be cleansed, purged from anything that defiles. We do fail, we sin, but we have a means of being cleansed through the mediatorship of the High Priest, Jesus Christ. In our struggle to be clean, as bearers of His vessels and doers of His work, we receive great help and comfort from God’s prophet:

“ . . . for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward.”
Isaiah 52:12.

This literally was true as the Almighty watched over Israel as they fled from the army of Pharaoh:

“ . . . the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel,

removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them:

And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.” Exodus 14:19-20.

The Almighty was indeed before and behind His people, and soon destroyed the might of Egypt in the Red Sea. In His kindness, our Father is leading us, Brethren and Sisters, in the way He would have us go. He is our rereward, guiding and covering as He looks down upon those joined to Him in a holy covenant. What comfort this brings in times of trial, tribulation, or illness which beset us and test our trust in Him.

“Rereward” (acaph in Hebrew) comes from a root word meaning to gather; its further use is — to assemble, to bring, or to receive. Isaiah used this thought as he spoke of the time of God’s kingdom to be established by the Lord Jesus:

“. . . he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather (acaph) together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.” Isaiah 11:12.

“Acaph” is also used by David in the titles of twelve Psalms as “A Psalm of Asaph (the gatherer)”. Jesus, God’s gatherer, is to return and gather His faithful to reign with Him in Zion. These Psalms of Asaph hold our hope and comfort for all who struggle toward and long for His coming to “gather” them. Let us look at a few of Asaph’s songs, to help us face whatever circumstances are to come upon us through the hand of the One who goes before, and is also our “rereward”. What perfect help we have!

Psalm 50 is the first “Psalm of Asaph”. It speaks of God’s purpose with His people:

“The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun . . .

Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.

He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people.” Psalm 50:1, 3-4.

This is a time of judgment, when He will condemn those who fail to honor Him. But also He will say:

“Gather my saints together unto me: those that have made

a covenant with me by sacrifice." Psalm 50:5.

What is this sacrifice of which God speaks? David's words make it very clear:

"Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High.

And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Psalm 50:14-15.

What mercy and love we can know from our God if we can but glorify Him. As mortal creatures, we suffer the illnesses and griefs of our flesh which God has ordained from the time of Adam. But there is help from a merciful Father who says: "... call upon me" — I "will go before you; and . . . will be your rereward" — "I will deliver thee." As we experience this deliverance at times, should it not help in our determination to more fully glorify our Father who has said:

"Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation (way of living) aright will I shew the salvation of God." Psalm 50:23.

What wondrous comfort and inspiration is here for those who in love for the Father are determined to serve Him.

The 73rd Psalm also is one of the "gatherer" as David exclaimed: "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart." Psalm 73:1.

How does He show this goodness? David, a man after God's own heart, gives us an example as he writes of this loving care:

". . . I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by thy right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." Psalm 73:23-24.

As David reached out his hand for help, God's presence was before and behind him. He expressed his mind in the words of the anthem we sing:

"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." Psalm 73:25-26.

And he finished this Psalm of Asaph, saying:

". . . it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works." Psalm 73:28.

As we declare or number all His works of mercy, love, and Fatherly correction on our behalf, we can become all the more aware of His

presence before and behind, to guide, to protect and to provide for us in all our troubles. Should we not rejoice in such mercy, Brethren and Sisters? David expressed his trust, comforted by the same assurance expressed by Isaiah:

“... The LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward.” Isaiah 52:12.

The Lord Jesus, God’s gatherer, spoke to His disciples, as He was soon to leave them:

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” John 16:33.

Do we not all know tribulation in this world? But here is the hope of lasting peace, made possible by His victory as he overcame the world and its temptations. Thus He can be the gatherer of all who likewise struggle to overcome the pull of the world. Let us lift up our heads, looking with trust in our Father’s words:

“Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.” Psalm 50:5.

J.A.DeF.

“I CREATE JERUSALEM A REJOICING”

Throughout the scriptures, it is impossible to overlook the importance God has placed upon the city of Jerusalem. The city has often been spoken of by the prophets as the seat of Christ’s Kingdom, and the future dwelling place of God with His people:

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.” Zechariah 8:7-8.

Those privileged to rule as kings and priests with Christ from Jerusalem, will be gathered from various places and ages — all having been called out from the world to deny self and serve God through obedience and love for His ways.

To God’s people called in Isaiah’s time, a rebuke was delivered through the prophet, because of their rebelliousness and determination to walk after their own ways:

“I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious

people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts;

Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not.”
Isaiah 65:2, 12.

God called Israel as His chosen people, taught them by the law and the prophets, that they might know what was required, yet they refused to yield. Because of their refusal to walk in His ways, their inheritance will be stripped away at the judgment seat of Christ, and their portion given to those who yielded in love to God’s hand upon them, and who endeavoured to walk obediently after the example of His Son. To them, God through Isaiah has promised:

“But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.”
Isaiah 65:18-19.

This inspiring message has been preserved that we today, who strive to be part of that Kingdom, can yet look to Jerusalem in hope and joy.

In the Revelation, Christ speaks of this same hope, encouraging the ecclesia at Philadelphia saying:

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.”
Revelation 3:12.

Further in Revelation, John in vision, saw those who will have in God’s mercy been judged worthy to become the Bride of Christ, gathered together and identified as “new Jerusalem”:

“And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Revelation 21:2-4.

God said He would rejoice in His people, and here they are shown in John's vision as the Bride of Christ — those whose eyes have been fastened upon Jerusalem in hope, during their time of probation.

In this same hope, Paul wrote to his brethren at Colosse, reminding that their spiritual course must be soundly set to attain unto this end:

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Colossians 3:1-4.

David, who reigned as king over Israel in Jerusalem, recognized its future spiritual importance when he wrote:

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.

Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.

For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee.

Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good." Psalm 122:6-9.

There is no peace today in Jerusalem as the Palestinian and Jewish sectors vie one with another to secure a controlling political interest over the city, thus creating antagonism and unrest. At the same time, Muslims, Christians and Jews all jealously claim a different section of the city as their own. This does not sound like the time of peace and prosperity that David prayed for, nor the time of rejoicing prophesied by Isaiah. Jerusalem will not be known as a city of peace and unity until the return of the Lord Jesus to establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

We are being shaped now by trial and affliction Brethren and Sisters, that in the hope of God's mercy we may be joined one day to Christ the Corner Stone, and become part of that holy temple to be assembled in Jerusalem.

"I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy". What a wonderful hope is contained in these words. Let us too "pray for the peace of Jerusalem", keeping our eyes fastened upon her, knowing that a true and lasting peace can only come with the return of the Lord Jesus, and the establishment of His righteous rule as the Prince of Peace — a day we anticipate in hope and fear.
M.C.S.

"DECEIVING AND BEING DECEIVED" (2 Tim. 3:13)

The above words warned of religious deterioration. The fact is that religious deception is more thoroughly condemned in the Word of God, than paganism.

The ancient ten tribes of Israel turned to worship golden calves instead of the One True God. Judah on the other hand continued to profess adherence to Temple worship and their God. This was a sham, and through Jeremiah the prophet the true position was revealed.

"Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and every green tree (to serve idols).

And I said after she had done all these things, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it - - - .

And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord.

And the Lord said unto me, The Backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah."

(Jeremiah 3:6-11).

The hypocrisy of Judah was also condemned by the prophet Isaiah. He revealed the evil practices of Judah, but also condemned their proclaimed confidence that they were better than anyone else.

"Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, and a fire that burneth all the day." (Isaiah 65:5).

Recently a National Newspaper revealed evil practices by a religious body describing themselves as "the Church of God" or "the Children of God". What a revelation it was! The press report

quoted the words of a young person who having spent the first twelve years of her life among this religious grouping, finally managed to escape from their influence. Speaking of how her mother was influenced by this religion she said:-

“What I find hard to forgive is the fact that when I needed her most, to protect me from the - - - physical abuse I suffered at the hands of her cult “brothers”, she was nowhere to be found”. - - -

“She (her mother) pledged her life to him (the American founder of this church) when she was only 16”. - - - “When she joined the group in 1973, she thought they were just another religious organisation. But by the time she had met and married my father - - - who was also a member, moved into a commune in Kent with about 20 other members - - - they must have realised that the group believed that (the evil practices committed) with their children were considered to be the will of God.” - - -

“If they felt uncomfortable with this aspect of his teachings, they didn’t dare show it.” - - -

“Newspaper reports about - - - goings on in the group made it necessary for them to consider leaving the country.”

- - -

“(Their leader) conveniently received a message from God telling him the group was needed in India, (where the complainant was born) also Africa and South America to save lost souls. My mother and father were excited by the idea of reforming all these foreign sinners.” - - -

“We lived in about 30 communes in different cities — Bombay, Madras, Rajasthan, Poona. Families were moved around all the time to prevent any real friendship between group members. My life revolved around prayer and (the leader’s) teachings, - - - parents were not allowed to show their own children any special attention.” - - -

This young victim went on to reveal that her parents eventually separated, her father going to Sri Lanka with one of his daughters. Another member then became dominant over her mother and the family who were left with her. Eventually her mother became depressed, so the house leader over their particular group decided to send her back to England for a while with the two youngest children. Later the dominant “brother” himself followed her mother to England with the rest of the family. And this last move gave the

mother the chance to make her escape with her family (for she had come to her senses). Waiting until the middle of the night she awakened her children, got them to dress, gathered what little of her belongings she had, and entered the accommodation of a "women's refuge" charity. She was afraid that group members would make a search for her and her family, and this indeed they did, but failed to make contact. Later the danger receded when the "brother" who had been particularly dominant over this family went to live in a "group home" in Australia.

When this terrible history is considered, one becomes aware how wide-spread are the tentacles of this so-called "Church of God". And how blatant is their hypocrisy, when they talk of visiting other countries in a work of "reforming foreign sinners".

It is a latter day situation that parallels the awful state of the people at the time of Isaiah, when his apostate associates made the claim "I am holier than thou", but demonstrated in their bad behaviour no conception of what holiness required.

This account reveals how ungodly men use the word of God to further their own inclinations and ambitions to dominate. The victims of such deceivers, are beguiled by a religious veneer, that makes "clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess." (Matthew 23:25).

A BIBLE CLASS

"THE WORDS OF A MAN'S MOUTH ARE AS DEEP WATERS"

Proverbs 18:4

Our consideration is taken from the Book of Proverbs. Solomon's words reflect the wisdom that God bestowed, in response to his earnest prayer. Thus we read:

"... he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five." I Kings 4:32.

Through these inspired words we are told:

"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:"

Proverbs 1:5.

Today we are considering one of his many "wisdoms" from which we can truly benefit as we listen to the promised wise counsel:

"The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters . . ."

Proverbs 18:4.

How can words be as "deep waters"? In water, which runs deep, we

cannot see the things which are hidden therein. Are man's words often like that? We cannot see into a man's heart, which is involved in a man's words, as Jesus reveals for us:

“... out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.” Matthew 12:34-35.

Depending upon what is in one's heart, the words of the mouth will speak — good, because the heart is toward God; or evil, if it is uncircumcised when the flesh is allowed to rule it. James helps us to understand how an unrestrained tongue reveals the evil inward thoughts:

“... the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; . . . But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.” James 3:6,8.

Only the word of God working on one's heart can tame it and bring it under control. As obedience to that word overcomes the fleshly inclinations inherent in all, so will it become a “broken and contrite heart” in subjection to God. Jesus continues:

“Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.” James 3:13.

“Conversation” used here implies not only speaking words, but it involves one's behavior, actions, and living. Wisdom active in one's heart will result in a meekness of attitude as there is a submitting to God's word. However, James also reveals:

“But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. But where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.” James 3:14-16.

David, knowing the bitterness of envy and strife from his enemies, prayed:

“Hear my voice, O God . . . preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity.

They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and

the heart, is deep.”

Psalm 64:1-2.

Indeed, the words of a man’s mouth are often as deep waters, bringing forth that which is in the heart — sometimes good, but often harmful, earthly, or sensual.

In contrast, we have the last part of our verse under consideration:

“ . . . the wellspring of wisdom (is) as a flowing brook.”

Proverbs 18:4.

What is the “wellspring of wisdom”? Is it not the word of God, the source of all wisdom and understanding? It is like a clear flowing stream, constantly providing a source of wisdom, bringing help and strength. It is always there, it is always available, filling our needs. Also, it is always right, true and with power — never empty, as the prophet reveals through God’s words:

“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”

Isaiah 55:11.

This is the “wellspring of wisdom” — the everlasting word of God, providing for the thirsty a water of life, but only to those who value, need, and embrace it. Again, David helps us to seek out that source with yearning and purpose:

“As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?”

Psalm 42:1-2.

Like the thirsty heart, David longed for the life-giving word of God to sustain his determination, earnestly desiring to serve Him. In looking forward to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, David also wrote:

“The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.”

Psalm 110:1-2, 7.

How often Jesus sought God’s word, to sustain and refresh, as He faced His enemies, and doubtless agonized to conquer His own flesh nature, lest He fail to accomplish His Father’s purpose.

The words of our subject remind us that one cannot trust in the words of man’s mouth, for they seldom savor of godly wisdom —

only human perceptions. But the word of God is an ever-flowing fountain of deep wisdom and a practical guide for our living, in our determination to follow His Son, Jesus Christ, as He has commanded. Let us join then in David's humble plea for help to please and honor our heavenly Father:

"Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion (reign) over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer."

Psalm 19:13-14.

J.A.DeF

"NOSTRADAMUS"

At Paphos in Cyprus Paul and Barnabas, in that early time, were troubled in their preaching work by "a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus" (Acts 13:6) whom they resisted.

Later at Ephesus certain Jews "exorcists took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth." (Acts 19:13). Their purported miracle work however went wrong when the maniac whom they hoped to influence, to gain a reputation for themselves, attacked and prevailed over them.

The Apostle Peter also had difficulty with Simon of Samaria who had "used sorcery, and bewitched the people - - - giving out that himself was some great one" (Acts 8:9) "to whom they all gave heed. - - -" When this man "thought that the gift (the power of the Spirit) might be purchased with money" Peter denounced such wrong thinking.

Recently the National Press has given prominence again to a certain Michel de Nostradam, who changed his name to Nostradamus. He was born in 1503 and died in 1566 and during his lifetime wrote four major works, one of which was "the centuries" a book of "visions" (1555) with 1000 verses warning of troubles to come. Scholars of the works of this Frenchman, who lived in Provence, say that he correctly predicted the rise of Napoleon, Francois Mitterrand's presidency, and the fall of the Berlin Wall. They also say he predicted a Third World War.

Superstitious people have been literally alarmed during the

year that has just passed because in Quatrain X.72 of his "visions" he predicted that "In 1999, the seventh month — From the sky will come a great King of Terror". Of course it did not happen. But what is interesting to us, is "the Christadelphian Magazine" comments of January 1871. Quoting some of Nostradamus' comments (which the following is a small extraction):

"When the figures of the century,
Added and doubled both agree,
And seven tens the year's decree,
Apollyon in the West shall rise,
His haughty head in great emprise,
Ruin shall mark his fierce advance:
War in his main, death in his glance;
His engines of destruction dire
Shall fill the air with blots of fire;
His metal ship shall scour the flood,
And turn the river's course with blood ---
The North shall come like beasts of prey;
The South shall mingle in the fray;
The East shall Memnon's statue raise;
The West shall see her cities blaze;
The Crescent waning, shall decay
Before the beams of the new day ---
Words of cheer on chords of love.
Through the ocean's slimy bed
Life shall triumph o'er the dead.
Heaven shall then its brooding wings
Fold o'er all sublunar things.
Men, united, know no war -
Liberty, their beacon star;
O'er the land and o'er the seas,
Shall be one universal peace ---
Then Apollyon's legions dead;
Then the king with triple head
Shall no more his fatal sway
Over men hold day by day."

The "Christadelphian" then went on to say after quoting Nostradamus:-

"On the supposition that these lines are, as seems probable from the style, the production of Nostradamus who --- published his prophecies in 1566, their remarkable coincidence with facts may be accounted for by the Jewish

extraction of their author, and his probable acquaintance with the prophecies of Daniel. The first two lines clearly point to 1870. The "figures of the century" are "18". These added give 9, which doubled gives 18, showing the agreement referred to. Seven times of years are, of course, 70. The events outlined are so far those of the last six months, and the general upshot of the tragedy in the fall of "the king with triple head", the "decay" of the crescent, the "triumph" of "life over the dead", and the establishment, under "the brooding wings of heaven", of "universal peace", is singularly in accord with the expectations which the Christadelphians have been led to form by the study of the Scriptures of Truth."

Of course Christadelphian expectations did not materialise, but 1870 was a significant year. From 756 to 1870 the Papacy had been the temporal power of a large area of central Italy. In 1870 Italy became unified into one kingdom, so the papal power was diminished. However that same year the Roman Catholic Vatican Council stated that when the pope was speaking officially on certain doctrinal or mortal matters he was protected from error by God, so came about the term "papal infallibility".

In the Middle East Turkey was weakening (called "the Sick Man of Europe") and before the end of that decade would lose Bulgaria as a result of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78; having previously lost its influence over Greece.

But more striking was the Franco-Prussian (1870-71) when France lost Alsace Lorraine, and the French Second Empire was abolished and the Third Republic was founded.

The Christadelphian can be excused for thinking the year 1870 significant because of what was happening. Indeed what happened in 1870-71 did set the scene for the disastrous wars which followed in the next century; for after Prussia's success over France, the German Empire was proclaimed under Chancellor Bismarck and its head King Wilhelm 1.

The words of Deuteronomy are pertinent to this consideration:-
 "If there arise - - - a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams,
 and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the
 wonder come to pass - - - Thou shalt not hearken unto
 the words of the prophet - - - for the LORD your God
 proveth you - - -" (Deut. 13:1-3).

Nostradamus the Jew was, of course, a false prophet.

REVILING (1864)

An answer of Dr. J. Thomas to those who would be accusers of those seeking to uphold the Truth, as being trouble makers.

They accuse you of rudeness and reviling. They would have you adopt their style, as if you were pleading a case in court, in which you had no more interest than the fee you expected to obtain when you had got through your otherwise irksome task. They would reduce you to the cold, unimpassioned style of a clerical reader of sermons. - - - Whatever they may think, they dare not accuse Paul, Peter, John, Jude and Christ of reviling; but they condemn their words in the mouths of Christ's brethren. Oh say they, "Christ was inspired and infallible; but you are not, and have no right to do as he did." But Peter exhorts us differently. He tells us, that Christ left us an example, that we should follow His steps; who did not sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again. Now, it is well to follow His steps in speaking, as well as in action. No better model for style than His can be found. He was a guileless enunciation of the Truth in word, tone and gesture, which left His hearers unmistakably impressed with His meaning. He has not left us to the dictionary for the definition of the word "revile". Matthew 5:11, clearly shows, that to revile is "to say all manner of evil against a man falsely:" to say evil of a man, or body of men, TRULY, is not reviling.

All said against Jesus reproachfully, was false, and therefore reviling; but all He said of His foes was true, and therefore not reviling, else to earnestly declare the Truth is reviling. Now, it is not necessary to be miraculously inspired, nor infallible, to qualify for discerning the truth in relation to modern teachers as surely as Jesus did in regard to the Scribes and Pharisees. He judged them by their fruits; and by the same rule, He said they should be known - - - It is not reviling to proclaim this truth upon the housetops. Christ does not employ men as His ministers who are ignorant of His Truth. They who think He does, are either ignorant of it themselves, or sceptical concerning it.

“SIGNS OF HIS COMING”

2000 A.D.

“O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known - - - .” (Habakkuk 3:2).

At the time that this magazine is being sent out the world (i.e. particularly the Western World) is making the turn of the century a very special occasion to celebrate; because it is now the year 2000. But what is there to celebrate about a century that has seen two very devastating World Wars; and other wars that have also seen much suffering and bloodshed? Knowledge has increased, but so has the ability to devastate and destroy.

Nevertheless the world celebrates not only the turn of the century, but also the turn of the millenium, and this is based upon the calendar that men have devised. The calendar is of course the division of the years into months, weeks, and days, and the method of ordering the years. There have been various calendars, but perhaps what is not generally recognised is that there is a true foundation basis for all this reckoning. The seven day week is because the Most High so ordained it in the Beginning, as well as the seasons and the years.

Men of course have deviated from the original demarkation. For example there is the Islamic calendar which is reckoned from the year of the flight of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina, which corresponds to the date in the Julian calendar of 16 July AD 622. The years of this calendar are lunar, consisting of 12 months with alternating 29 or 30 days, plus one extra day at the end of the 12th month in leap years, which occur at specific intervals in each cycle of 30 years. The beginning of the month in the Islamic calendar depends on the visibility of the new moon which means that the Islamic reckoning is not absolutely precise.

Another calendar observed by a large part of the World's population is the Chinese. This is also lunar with a cycle of 60 years. Each year consists of 12 alternating 29 and 30 day months totalling 354 days, which is the lunar year. Animal names numbering 12 are attached to the years, which date back to the corresponding figure of 2277 BC.

The calendar of the Western World is the Gregorian. This was formulated by Aloysius Lilius, an astronomer of Naples, followed by one Clavius who developed and explained it. (AD 1582). It was necessary to compensate for the difference between the solar year

and the lunar year (which is measured by the three phases of the waxing, the full and the waning of the moon).

The common solar year contains 365 days, but the lunar year only 354. This is why there has been some contention over the years by Church Authorities over the dating of Easter (regarded by the large denominations as an important Church Festival). Easter is supposedly based on the Jewish Passover. But the Church was determined to hold a tradition for Easter to be celebrated on a Sunday, and this Sunday must follow the 14th day of the paschal moon. Therefore if the 14th of the paschal moon should fall on a Sunday, then Easter must be celebrated on the Sunday following. As a consequence the English Easter Holiday period varies from year to year in the calendar, and is different to the Jewish observance. In 1923 a committee was appointed by the League of Nations to consider having a fixed Easter, but it did not succeed.

It will be seen from this that religious observances, which are seemingly important remembrances, are not based on strict adherence to the true facts.

There is also the Hindu calendar. This has combined solar years and lunar years from early times, which endeavours to keep the beginning of the lunar year to that of the solar year. The solar year is divided into 12 months, and the civil days of the solar month begin at sunrise and are numbered 1, 2, 3, etc., in unbroken succession to the end of the month; the length of the month being variable, the number of civil days for each month ranging from 29 to 32.

So the World at large does have differences in calendar dating. Such a consideration helps one to see that the celebration date AD 2000 is not of universal importance.

AD 2000 will be a Leap Year. Since 1752 the Gregorian calendar means that in each 400 years there are three fewer days than in the Julian calendar which was displaced by the Gregorian. There are therefore three fewer leap years, and these are chosen by making an end-of-century year a leap year ONLY IF ITS DATE IS DIVISIBLE BY 400. AD 2000 being divisible by 400 makes it a leap year.

It has been said that one way of accurately marking off the years, is by observation of the movements of the constellations; the stars in their courses. How this comment reminds of what was originally declared:-

“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the

heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years;
And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven -
--."

(Genesis 1:14-15).

The demarkation of time is therefore of and from the Great Creator. Time indicates a passing on to a culmination of a purpose. The six days of the Creation led to a finish and a rest, which was on the seventh day. The years and the centuries since that time have led on to development and fulfilment.

As time has gone by prophecies have come to pass, and men have behaved as the word of God has predicted, to their condemnation. Past history has been a dreadful account of evil. But the 20th century has been particularly so, with greater bloodshed and suffering than ever before.

What then of the 21st Century? At the time of writing there is great jubilation that the year 2000 is near, but how can there be confidence that at last mans' behaviour will change for the better? What then is there to rejoice about? No wonder Habakkuk the prophet prophetically cried out:-

"O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive (Margin note: preserve alive) thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy."

(Habakkuk 3:2).

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

**HAMBURG, NEW YORK, Corner Southwestern Blvd.
and Pleasant Ave.**

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m.

Sunday Afternoon Class 1.45 p.m.

Midweek: Bible Class: Forestville, Hamburg and Fredonia

Every Third Week: Revelation Study

Mailing of invitations for booklets of interest to the general public was resumed in September. Plans are, God willing, to cover three local townships in the hope of creating interest in the things of God. We earnestly pray for His guidance and blessing in this work.

J.A.DeF.

MANCHESTER, *Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.*

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.00 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 7.15 p.m.

As the work continues with interest in various quarters we realise that it is a privilege to be so occupied. Endeavours for the Truth are the most meaningful things we can do.