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The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of
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A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

"Take heed ye be not deceived"

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

THE HISTORY OF THE TRUTH IN THE LATTER DAYS

SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

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At the Table of the Lord

“Labour Not for the Meat Which Perisheth”

Each who is striving to be one with the Lord Jesus, finds himself engaged in a work to serve Him. How necessary it is that one take stock of himself on occasion to see that the work is being done in accordance with the Master's will. How empty a labour if all the energy, time, and resources should be expended to no avail!

The Lord Jesus says in John 6 : 27, “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life.” These words are a guide whereby it is possible to determine whether our labour is pleasing to Him. Must we then examine our hearts to determine for what we are labouring? Is it that which is enduring, which can lead to everlasting life, or is it for things which seem important now, but in the time to come will appear as worthless?

Perhaps help can be found, as the Creator speaks through Isaiah chapter 55 : 2-4—

“Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.”

Our God, the Father of the faithful, provides food for His people. How important that they are attentive to His words, eating that food diligently. To eat, we find, means to consume or devour, and as in the natural sense, do we not find food must be digested, absorbed into the whole system, for nourishment and growth? Is, then, brethren and sisters, our labour to be the constant seeking for that food and the eating of it, so that our spirit may flourish, growing as a child of God? Isaiah speaks of the fatness which delights the soul, and which can only come by partaking of the bread of life. The word in the Hebrew for “fatness” represents essential goodness in the sense used by the prophet. It is remarkable that the same word is translated “ashes” in reference to the burnt offering (Leviticus 6 : 10) where the priest was to “Take up the ashes which the fire hath consumed with the burnt offering on the altar”. By usage of the word in this sense, our Hebrew brethren and sisters would understand that the essential goodness of the offering was that which was left after the flesh had been consumed—ashes—which it will be remembered had to be gathered up and stored in a clean place. How significant that after the burning on the altar only the ashes are left, the essential goodness or fatness which comes of partaking of the “meat which endureth to everlasting life.” Is it that for which we are labouring because we realise that all else will be consumed by the fire?

Isaiah 55 continues, verses 3 and 4—

“Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and a commander to the people.”

David is held up by the Almighty as one who heard, who laboured for the meat which perisheth not, and as a result, a covenant was made with him, and he is a witness (testimony) even today—one out in front to lead us in God’s way.

“His Own Proper Good”

We know of his desire to build a house for his God. He was told by the Almighty that he could not, because he was a man of war. Yet, he did not cease from his labour, but prepared with all his power, materials for the house that his son was to build. The record of this is found in I Chronicles, and we know how pleasing it must have been in the sight of his Father. Can we not find example here, as to what our labour must be, a striving as David, to build, to bend all our efforts to the furtherance of God’s Purpose? How are we to do it? We read in I Chronicles 29 : 3-4—

“Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of my own proper good . . . given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, even three thousand talents of gold . . . and seven thousand talents of refined silver.”

Here was a giving of his “own proper good”, of more than was required. It is helpful to see that the Hebrew used for “proper good” is also used for “peculiar treasure”, in Exodus 19 : 5—“If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.” And also for “jewels” in Malachi chapter 3 : 17, “And they shall be mine (those that fear the Lord), saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.” David had given stores of precious things, treasure of his own, for which he had laboured, given because he had set his affection to the house of God. These offerings would indeed be in God’s eyes a pleasing gift. Do they not assure us that David and all who will be like David, will in time to come, know the joy of becoming the great Jehovah’s “peculiar treasure”?

Continuing, to verse 5 of I Chron. 29, we read : “Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?” We find the words “consecrate his service” to mean to “fill the hands”. Brethren and sisters, can our labour be like David’s, our hands full,

and gladly so, to serve Him? Is this indeed the meat that endures?

A Pattern Given

Because of David's willing heart, God gave him guidance in the work for we read in I Chronicles 28 : 11-12 of "the pattern . . . that he had by the spirit". Surely here was confirmation to David of God's pleasure with his labour—divine instruction given as to how the temple should be built. Can this be the experience of each of us, who are filling the hands, and therefore, must we in faith and humility, but with desire, seek His guidance?

David desired to pass on to Solomon this which he had learned by many joyful and bitter experiences, and so exhorted Solomon in I Chronicles 28 : 9-10—

"And thou, Solomon . . . know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and a willing mind . . . If thou seek him, he will be found of thee . . . Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong and do it."

Was this from David's long experience the only labour which he knew would endure—to know, to serve, and to seek the Almighty? Solomon, while he was permitted to know God and His requirements, did not continually serve or seek Him, and near the end of his life, we find he concludes that "all is vanity and vexation of spirit", while in Ecclesiastes 12 : 13-14—"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment . . . whether it be good, or whether it be evil." This he was forced to acknowledge, after a life which he recognised was a labouring for vanity.

Brethren and sisters, can we profit by this sad example, and then by the words of David? Can we seek what he sought? Are we in our very hearts labouring for the meat which does not perish, but which endures unto eternal life?

"I have finished the work"

Turning again to the Lord Jesus, we find His mind expressed in John 4 : 34—

"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

What a great labour this was, for it is recorded in John 17 : 4—

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

His labour, then, was to glorify His Father by complete obedience. He gave the whole of His life to that end, and dying, He cried out, "It is finished". (John 19 : 30). A work accomplished,

a work to everlasting life for Himself, and for many others. Can we look to Him, brethren and sisters, who has experienced all the trials and sadness which the flesh knows, and yet, who is the Victor? The Apostle Paul did so, labouring for Him, and following His example, and at the end could say—

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” II Timothy 4 : 7.

He knew the fight had to be an agonising one, and only as our lives are such, shall we truly be labouring for the meat which does not perish.

“Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Spirit”

Paul speaks again in Romans 14 : 17-18—“The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Do not these words help, as we labour to find approval? Our service must be for the things which endure—righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Now these things do not just come to us, but are the fruits of a faithful agonising in accordance with His will.

“Righteousness”, having to do with justice and equity, is a quality of the Almighty, and one which His people reflect in their lives. “Peace”, speaks of a oneness, a unity sought for in the world, but never achieved because true peace can only come from a binding to God in righteousness and a striving to be one with Him and His Son. With the righteousness and peace, comes joy in the Holy Spirit: a joy that is found as the hand of God is experienced and submission is learned . . . The Lord Jesus speaks of that joy in John 15 : 10-11—

“If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, and that your joy might be full.”

Brethren and sisters, in the time soon to come when the Lord Jesus judges all our work, will He find that our labour has been for that which endures? He is searching our hearts now to prove all who are striving to be the victors. He is giving all the help that is needed. Let us look closely at our lives, eliminating what is not needful, and adding to that which the spirit man requires. Can we respond to the plea of the Apostle Paul—

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the

renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” Romans 12 : 1-2.

J.A.DeF.

The History of the Truth in the Latter Days (6)

Christadelphians and Re-union

Re-union has taken place between the Central and Suffolk Street Christadelphians. It may seem a great achievement for numbers have increased, but where is the Truth? Right cannot be determined by vote, even by a preponderant majority (the words used in the official statement), but only by the Word of God. If Reunion be right then Robert Roberts and those with him were wrong, grievously wrong and the cause of division, concerning whom the Word says

“Avoid them which cause divisions”.

Present Christadelphians should never again quote the words and counsel of Robert Roberts if he were guilty of so great a crime against God and man. If, on the other hand, as the evidence submitted shows, Robert Roberts were zealous for His name at the time of the Division in 1885, then present Reunion is a denial of his good work in preserving the Truth from corruption. The basis of Reunion is an agreed Statement of Faith, which on the face of it may seem satisfactory, but a little examination of the position will show that it is nothing more than a facade covering all kinds of evil.

The Statement of Faith

What a difference there is in the attitude of those who formerly drafted the Statement, and those who now seek to use it as a basis for “Reunion”. Formerly, the “Statement of Faith” with “Doctrines to be Rejected” was regarded as a convenient means of reminding the brotherhood of the salient points of the Truth, and especially of those items which had been challenged by false brethren. This is seen in that it was the practice to add to the Statement after the disposal of some heresy threatening the Truth. Never was it regarded as the repository of all vital Truth. Other items of revealed truth were regarded as equally important although not included in the Statement of Faith. The brethren believed and taught, for example, that the enlightened would be raised to judgment, even though not baptised, long before any reference was made to the heresy denying this in the “Doctrines to be Rejected”. When later this error raised its head there was no saying that it was of secondary importance because it was not in the “Statement of Faith”. If any truth could be demonstrated from the Word, then that was sufficient for its acceptance by the brethren; and for the rejection of

those who denied it, whether coming to the Body, or brethren in the Body.

The "Statement of Faith" with "Doctrines to be Rejected", sometimes referred to as the "Constitution" because it is usually included in the "Constitution" is useful only in so far as it directs the mind to the authority of the Word. If it comes to be regarded as the sole court of appeal on matters affecting fellowship then the words of men, however carefully they are penned, become exalted above the Word of God. Let it be recognised that the Word of God only is alive and powerful, dividing what belongs to the soul (flesh) from the spirit. No human instrument can or should be used for such a purpose. As attempts have been made to divide between the flesh and the Spirit by aid of the "Constitution", or to unite factions by it, what dreadful propositions have been raised. In the recent controversy the question has been asked: "If there are thirty articles of Faith and one be rejected—will a putting under the water be a baptism, or will such a one be rejected for just failing on one?" In this human philosophical approach to the subject the vital facts are omitted. Coming into the family of God, and retention in that family is a matter of life, not merely the assent to certain man-made propositions. There may be acceptance of a Statement, and a profession of words, but whether the "life" is there only examination in the light of the Word will show. Fellowship is not merely membership, for its very basis is none other than a fellowship with God and His Son by an intelligent appreciation of the Light, and a walking therein. One who has not this "light" may be put under the water but he will not be baptised; and if the "light" be lost by those who are baptised, through "walking in darkness" then they lose the fellowship of the Father and His Son. When this is revealed action requires withdrawal after the steps taken "to gain" have been fulfilled.

The recent controversy—as well as some previous controversies—has given the "Statement of Faith" an altogether unwarranted position.

What must God think of those claiming to be His Sons, meeting to discuss the "minimum" as an agreement to reconcile two factions? This is a worldly practice among the nations, and among associations of men, to find a form of words which will accommodate different parties in an apparent unity. It is a practice which can have no place in the House of God. The members of the true Body of the Son are drawn together by His power. His Spirit, as a living entity, in which is felt the warm and enlivening qualities of His love. To depend on a "Statement of Faith" for unity is to turn from the living spirit of the Word to the deadness of the letter. Imagine trying to draw up a "Statement" of rules to govern a

marriage. The idea is revolting as it is ludicrous; for where there is love then there will be unity not in offering the "minimum" but in doing as much as possible. The servants of God are called to be espoused as a chaste virgin unto Christ. Shall their acceptability be determined by reference to man-made abstracts of the Word? Will not rather the promise of Christ be fulfilled in the true Body concerning which Christ said :

"Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them."

(Matt. 18 v. 20).

With Him there is light and life providing a genial unity; without Him only the coldness of the dead letter and the confusion of darkness remains.

The Failure of "Statements of Faith"

Experience in the last generation has shown how miserably "Statements of Faith" have failed to protect the Truth. "Ecclesias" have passed resolutions concerning various items, adding that they uphold these "without reservation", but how often these resolutions have been found to be nothing more than a cover for some lurking evil or error. In almost every crisis there have been those who support a resolution, carefully worded to deal with the issue, whilst allowing themselves a liberty of interpretation which destroyed the purpose of the resolution. Many who said in the Inspiration Division that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" were found to believe in partial inspiration. When challenged their reply was that all that was in the Bible was not "scripture."

If the salvation of the Truth is to depend on a "Statement of Faith" then it must perish. A "Statement of Faith" is useful only insofar as it directs the mind to the Word, and must always be regarded as completely secondary to the Word.

In spite of the article in the Statement of Faith declaring that the Bible is wholly inspired, one member of Temperance Hall says he believes it is 99.9 (recurring) percent inspired! Not 100%!

In spite of "non-responsibility of enlightened rejectors" being included as a doctrine to be rejected, a member of Suffolk Street can write concerning "enlightened rejectors" that they will not be raised. He adds :

"To my mind, it is beyond comprehension that any who have not taken the necessary steps to becoming born again to newness of life, should be subject to one of the exclusive features of aionian life—I mean Resurrection from the Dead".

A "Statement of Faith" is useful, yea is good, if kept in its proper place as subservient at all times to the Word. When it comes to be

looked upon as a legal agreement, assent to which is necessary for entry into the "Ecclesia" the very purpose it is intended to serve disappears, as the careful amongst those in both camps may readily prove. Erroneous ideas and teaching abound in spite of the Statement of Faith. To many Christadelphians the "Statement of Faith" means little more than do the thirty-nine articles to the present Church-goer.

The Essential Doctrine of Fellowship. First lost by Suffolk Street.

The beautiful and powerful doctrine of fellowship is seen throughout the Scriptures to be the means by which a chosen people can become the dwelling of the Almighty, rejoicing in the light and the hope light brings, and be separated from the darkness with all its vanity and misery.

That mortals can attain to such a blessed state seems almost impossible for human minds to grasp; nevertheless, such is His mercy through His Son. A blessing of such magnitude, however, has its responsibilities and conditions. It could not be otherwise. Who would dare presume that God would dwell with a careless people, a people not mindful of His holiness and all the requirements of His Truth? Almost every act of the brethren and sisters in Israel had to be regulated by this solemn consideration. The washing, the cleansing, the putting of a difference between the clean and the unclean embraced most of domestic and ecclesial life. The requirements were so complete that brethren and sisters at the time were shown how great was the holiness of God, and how favoured they were to have His Presence with them.

This is the scriptural view of fellowship, and involves the conditions on which God will dwell with His people; and also those on which He will leave them! Fellowship, or conditions of fellowship, is not a passport into a sect; neither is it a means of showing how one group has more of the Truth than another.

"Truly, our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ". (I John 1 v. 3).

This is the acknowledged basis of true fellowship one with another. As the Apostle explains, fellowship is dependent upon recognising that God is light, and therefore is only possible by "walking in the light". Not that there is a deliverance from sinning as the Apostle so strongly emphasises; but certainly no darkening of the light is permissible to meet human convenience and preference.

It is in the practical application of this doctrine where those in error have always failed. The record of the Old Testament is still preserved to admonish those who will hear. A difference of treatment is seen in the one who sins through weakness, and the one

who having sinned will not repent. The first could make an offering and receive forgiveness, but the one who refused to hear was counted as despising the Law of his God. He was stoned by the congregation; an act of divine justice designed to keep the camp holy and to teach all Israel "to hear and fear". This same principle is carried into the New Testament in the command to "withdraw from every brother who walketh disorderly", after suitable opportunity to repent.

Preservation of Fellowship with God

It is on this point of action, of proof of loyalty to the Truth, that Suffolk Street first failed. No one likes withdrawal. It seems opposed to the sentiment of spiritual charity; yet without its effective application there is no hope for the congregation. The camp will be defiled. God will leave His dwelling, when all that means light and life will go. Those falling away from the Truth are the first to argue for tolerance and charity in dealing with those in error, but brethren cannot be more kind than God. A brother who is in error and will not repent after the first or second admonition denies God. Sympathy beyond this point neither helps him nor the congregation, but rather works the other way, for a little leaven will continue to work, unseen, of course, until the whole be leavened, by which time God will no longer be with the congregation, whatever claims are made. Then induction into such a body is only entrance into that which is dead. They may be called "baptisms" but in truth they cannot be, for God and His Son are not there.

This is where Suffolk Street failed in 1885, and has failed all along. Withdrawal as a means of preserving the holiness of the camp, as a habitation of God, is to most of them anathema. In fact, many say they do not agree with it. At the time of the Inspiration Division, when many were denying that certain books of the Bible were inspired, Thos. Turner, late Editor of the "Fraternal Visitor" excuses these grievous offences in these words :

"Our duty is 'to receive those who are weak in the faith, but not to doubtful disputation'. Or, as I understand, that so long as a brother has a weakness and does not teach error, it is our duty to receive him, and try to lead him to see his mistake . . . In the light of Paul's teaching I see the necessity for standing aside from those who teach the doctrine of partial inspiration, but I see no scriptural warrant for standing aside from all who, in their weakness refuse to repudiate this doctrine." (Rewritten in 1925).

What a flagrant travesty of scriptural teaching to represent a refusal to repudiate the doctrine of partial inspiration as a “weakness”! Here was the original fundamental difference between Suffolk Street and Temperance Hall. Suffolk Street described a sin against the Almighty as “weakness”, so that withdrawal could be avoided Temperance Hall at the time, under the vigorous leadership of Robert Roberts, declared by their actions :

“To the law and to the testimony. If they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them”, (Isaiah 8).

and resolved to have no fellowship with such unfruitful works of darkness.

Once the doctrine of fellowship has been surrendered the hedge between the congregation and the world disappears. Soon the practices of the world and many of its beliefs enter the camp, until in a little while there is no material difference between the “camp” and the world.

Destroying the Hedge

It is not surprising that with the giving up of the vital doctrine of fellowship in deference to human sentimentality Suffolk Street pursued a policy of receiving into their midst those who had lost the Truth in previous divisions. Allow human reasoning to enter, varnish it with so called charity, and let the mind forget the conditions on which God will dwell with His people, and in a little while the “camp” will become indistinguishable from the world. First the “Dowieites” joined hands with the “Renunciators”. Then later Suffolk Street welcomed into “fellowship” both and also those who had left the Truth on the doctrine of enlightened rejectors being responsible to judgment. Those in Suffolk Street are not able to differentiate between sin which a brother must forsake (or else leave the congregation), and “weakness” which some brethren in the Apostle’s day and even now feel with regard to certain meats and drinks—certain customs which though permissible might become a snare because of their previous associations. Certainly sin can come through “weakness” as we all know, but to describe sin—which places a brother in a position in which he will perish unless he repents—as “weakness” is a subversion of the Truth and only serves to confuse and detract from the simple path of duty both as regards the sinning brother and the congregation. It is not help to a brother who sins to say it is not sin but “weakness”. Such counsel is evil and only likely to bring that brother’s blood upon those failing to warn him to turn from that which means death. Further to speak of such wrong as “weakness” before the congregation is dishonouring to God.

THE REMNANT

Remember He will not dwell with those who walk in darkness, those who are unrepentant in error or sin.

To show how far a congregation may be joined to the world—perhaps without realising it—there was in Manchester (and probably still is) a Suffolk Street “Christadelphian Church” outside of which there is a Notice Board bearing the legend

“Sunday, 6.30 p.m. PUBLIC WORSHIP”

—a simple testimony which speaks volumes on how far Suffolk St. have become part of the world, and the world part of them. The root cause of such disaster is the failure to realise the doctrine of fellowship—the conditions on which the great God of Heaven will tabernacle with a people.

In joining with such a people, notwithstanding their claim to the name Christadelphian, what is being embraced—light or darkness? The Truth or the world? How then can the cry be made to “come out and be separate and touch not the unclean”? To such the world is not as evil as God sees it. There is a reluctance to condemn, and the specious suggestion is made that spreading the Truth is a declaring of positives, a refraining from condemning. How must God view such an attitude? His servant Noah built an ark. By it he condemned the world. Now these are the days spoken of by Jesus as being like those of Noah. The Truth will be distinguishable by its forthright condemnation of that which God condemns—that some may heed and flee before the wrath to come.

The trial of faith is proved in many ways but perhaps most of all when a man is called to separate from those of his own house because of enlightenment. As Jesus said, the truth is like a sword, which will divide members of a house, severing attachments which were previously precious. There is compensation however: Jesus said :

“There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and gospel’s,
But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses and brethren and mother and children”.

Yes, a hundredfold indeed. Not as referring to numbers, but what is far more valuable the perfect relationship with all the love and care of true fathers, mothers and brethren.

In the next issue it is proposed to resume the Historical narrative. It is hoped that this interpolation may serve to reveal the divine principles which have always been at stake as human weakness has tended to accommodate its own desires by forsaking the doctrine of fellowship.

(to be continued . . .)

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

Right through the centuries there has remained in existence the silent testimony of the prophets of Israel, passed over by the world and discounted by Christendom. These holy men of God, who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, all spoke of the same great “day of the Lord”, witnessing to events which would surely come to pass “in the last days”.

When their combined testimony is examined, a striking fact emerges, namely, that the whole of their prophecies centre around Israel, either portraying the future glory of the Land and its inhabitants, or witnessing to the destruction of each and every one of her adversaries. Remove Israel from the map and every prophecy would lose its meaning, its power. As a typical example, let the writings of the prophet Ezekiel be considered. This godly man, a captive in the land of Babylon during the closing years of the Kingdom of Judah, was directed to send forth the word of God to all those of the captivity. It is impressive to observe the sequence of some of his prophecies. He was commanded to testify in no uncertain terms to the wickedness of Jerusalem, and to the unfaithfulness and rebellion of Israel and Judah. Then came a particular message “in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month”—

“Son of Man, write thee the name of the day,
even of this same day: the king of Babylon set
himself against Jerusalem this same day,
And utter a parable unto the rebellious house
...”
(Ezekiel 24 : 1).

Jerusalem besieged, her destruction sounded! This was a dark day for all God’s people. “The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem”. True, they had not yet entered, but it was only a matter of time.

For eighteen months the siege continued, the famine increased :
“The hands of the pitiful women have sodden
their own children: they were meat in the des-
truction of the daughter of my people.”

How impressive that at this very time, the prophet should be commanded “to set his face” against each in turn of Israel’s neighbours, to announce their ultimate destruction. Let us observe that in every case the reason was the same : hatred and hostility towards Israel!

Thus against the Ammonites :

“Son of Man, set thy face against the Ammonites,
and prophecy against them . . .
Because thou saidst, Aha, against my sanctuary,
when it was profaned, and against the land of
Israel . . . Behold I will destroy thee . . .”
(Chapter 25)

Then against the Moabites :

“Because that Moab and Seir do say, Behold,
the house of Judah is like unto all the heathen,
Therefore . . . I will execute judgments upon
Moab; and they shall know that I am the Lord.”

Likewise against Edom :

“Because that Edom hath dealt against the house
of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly
offended, and revenged himself upon them;
Therefore . . . I will also stretch out mine hand
upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast . . .
and they shall know my vengeance.”

After this the prophet was commanded to witness against Tyre :

“Son of Man, because that Tyrus hath said against
Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken . . . I shall be re-
plenished, now she is laid waste,
Therefore . . . Behold, I am against thee, O
Tyrus . . . thou shalt never be found again . . .
and they shall know that I am the Lord.”
(Chapters 26-28)

And so the prophet continued to testify, against Zidon, against Egypt, against Assyria, at the very time that Jerusalem was in despair and her enemies rejoicing. What comfort for those with “ears to hear” at a time when outwardly there was nothing but darkness and distress.

Eventually the famine prevailed and Jerusalem fell. In due time, too, her enemies fell, as God had said they would. Yet although Ezekiel’s prophecies received fulfilment at the time, it was only an incipient fulfilment, for it is clear beyond doubt that the prophet’s mind was being projected to the “time of the end”, when all nations shall yet again come against Israel to battle, a time when all the world shall be caused “to know that I am the Lord.”

The Sealing of the Prophecies

During the tumultuous centuries which followed, these words of Ezekiel, like those of his fellow prophets must have provided hope and encouragement to every faithful Israelite, who saw in them the assurance that God would eventually vindicate His people

and avenge those who for so long had been “pricking briars to the house of Israel.” But eventually some thirty years after the time of Christ, an event of profound importance took place. Jerusalem was again destroyed: and Israel was removed from the map. It was as though, in one stroke, all God’s prophecies were “frozen”—for how could the testimony of the prophets concerning Israel be fulfilled if Israel were no more?

Throughout the nineteen centuries which have since elapsed, the writings of Israel’s prophets have remained “frozen”, sealed, incapable of fulfilment until—yes, until just nine years ago! In that memorable year of 1948, in the afternoon of May 14th, Israel was reborn. Now, once again, she is in the promised land, once more on the map. No longer are the prophecies “sealed” and incapable of fulfilment! It is indeed the “time of the end”, and those words to Daniel come forcibly to mind :

“Shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end . . . Go thy way, Daniel for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.” (Chapter 12).

There comes to mind, too, the parable of the Lord Jesus, given in response to the question, What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world? After enumerating some of the fearful signs which should be seen in the earth, He said :

“Now learn a parable . . . Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye shall see and know . . . ” (Luke 21).

Evidently Israel, depicted as the fig tree, is not the only nation to “shoot forth”, for Jesus adds “. . . and all the trees.” Who are these? Surely here is a reference to Israel’s neighbours, who like Israel herself, are now shooting forth with vigour and confidence, rising in power and influence, but still breathing the old hatred, and giving meaning to the words of Jesus which follow :

“So likewise ye, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

Verily, I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.”

How different now is the scene as compared with just ten years ago! The “fig tree” has certainly come to life, as the United Nations Organisation has been caused to realise! Likewise have “all the trees” come to life again after centuries of lying dormant. And so too are the writings of the prophets, coming alive as never before. Truly, these are “the last days” when not one jot nor tittle of their writings shall fail.

All Eyes on the Middle East

Is it surprising, then, that the eyes of all the world should now be fastened on the Middle East, the land of the Bible, wherein dwelt the nations of which Ezekiel wrote so much? It was in the Middle East that life began six thousand years ago, and it is here, too, that the world will be caused to know that "I am the Lord, and there is none else," when all nations come up against Jerusalem to battle.

Gradually the divine writings begin to take shape. Already in the north, hovering in the distance, is the great Assyria, "whose waters shall overflow the land", ready and prepared to come down upon the land of unwallled villages brought back from the sword. There, too, are the Arabs, united as ever in their common hatred of Israel, ready to rejoice and say "Aha" as calamity approaches Jerusalem. Only one thing now remains to be seen—the King of the South, whose "pushing" is to trigger the fury of the northern hosts. At this very moment, all eyes are watching slowly, inexorably, the final development of the King of the South, that great confederacy of nations symbolised by the prophet as "the Merchants of Tarshish." How remarkable that events in Egypt should be singling out, and cementing together, all the maritime nations of the world!

A little provocation, a little pushing :

"And at the time of the end, shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come at him, like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen . . .

And at that time shall Michael stand up . . .
and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation . . ."

We are on the verge of great events :

"But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?"

J.R.M.



News from the Ecclesias

Beeston (Notts.)—Adult School Room, Acacia Walk, Beeston.

Sundays : Breaking of Bread, 11.0 a.m. Sunday School, 2.0 p.m.

Bible Class, 3.0 p.m. Thursdays : 7.45 p.m. at the People's Hall.

How grateful we should be for the comfort of the Scriptures and for the hope of their message, especially as we see statesmen perplexed and frustrated in their efforts to attain stability and security in a world which knows not God.

THE REMNANT

To help us continue "steadfast unto the end" we have had the ministrations of Brethren Pulman and Smith.

H.J.S.

Criccieth.—Pentrip, Black Rock, Portmadoc. Sundays: Breaking of Bread, 11.0 a.m. Revelation Study, 3.0 p.m.

The putting forth of "the still small voice of truth" continues, sometimes but not always with disappointing results. At the moment there is encouraging response from one who seems interested and who is pursuing enquiries.

Arrangements are in hand for a further lecture in Portmadoc on March 30th.

per J.R.M.

Eden, New York.—Grange Hall, Church Street. Sundays: Breaking of Bread, 11.15 a.m. Sunday School, 10.0 a.m. Revelation Study, 1.30 p.m. Bible Class: Mid-week alternately in Forestville and Hamburg.

Immediate results of our work in Hamburg were disappointing. However, we know that bread cast upon the waters may be found after many days; so we strive to be diligent.

Plans for the Sunday School Party are being made, so that the good work of the children may be encouraged and rewarded.

Sister Hazel Glenn's safe return from England is gratefully acknowledged. The fellowship and close contact of all members of the Body is more and more desirable, and is evident in the messages she brought back.

J.A.DeF.

Manchester.—Memorial Hall, Albert Square Manchester. Sundays: Breaking of Bread, 11.30 a.m.. Lecture, 3.15 p.m. Thursdays: 7.45 p.m. at Onward Hall. Law of Moses Class second Saturday in the month at 3.30 p.m.

Attendance at the lectures has been somewhat better during the past month and we have been encouraged by some at each effort. Arrangements are in hand for special distribution in a populous suburb of Manchester. Envelopes are to be addressed containing "A Key to the Scriptures" and a lecture syllabus, and then distributed by the brethren and sisters.

Preliminary notice can be given of a special meeting for Christadelphians only in the Small Theatre, The Midland Institute, Birmingham on Saturday, April 6th at 3.0 p.m. on the subject of fellowship and Re-union. Full details of subject will be given in next month's magazine.

W.V.B.