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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

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At the Table of the Lord

“FEAR NOT . . . THOU ART MINE”

WE have been privileged to listen to the Word of God, through His prophet, Isaiah. These words were spoken to encourage, to help, to reveal God's grace towards Israel, to help them realise the blessing that was theirs, having been chosen to be His children.

As we listen to the words of the prophet, conveying God's grace, we find they are a help to us as well, for we, too, know the privilege of being called to be His children. He cares, He provides for us as His children, just as He did for Israel in Isaiah's time.

Perhaps as we realise the position of the children of God, when God spoke to them, it can help to a better understanding of His care. The chronology tells us that Isaiah spoke these words in 712 B.C. It was at this time that Sennacherib, the king of Assyria came up to capture Jerusalem, to destroy it, and to make the children of God bow down to the gods of Assyria. Hezekiah was king over Judah, a faithful king, who feared God and strove in all things to serve Him. God spoke through Isaiah, encouraging him and his brethren, and finally destroyed the mighty Assyrian army. With this background, we can more fully appreciate what a help God's words were to Hezekiah, and the children of Israel, under seige in Jerusalem. Many in Jerusalem must have been sorely tempted to knuckle under to the might of Sennacherib, feeling after all, how can we overcome so great a power! Help was given through the steadfastness and faith of Hezekiah, by his speaking to their hearts of the power of God on their behalf, as well as through the Word of God spoken by Isaiah. This help nourished those who trusted in God's power, and so deliverance came.

The situation in the world today is not greatly different—a few people, called to belong to His Son—surrounded by adversaries. We may not think of them as adversaries in the sense that Sennacherib's armies were, but let us examine closely, brethren and sisters. What are they trying to do—what are their objectives? Are they to honour, to obey, to please God? By our daily contacts in the world, we know those of the world are adversaries—would like to wear down our determination to be a separate people; would like to pull us down to their level—to have us serve their desires of the flesh, join them in the pleasures which are so contrary to God's desires. Each one of us has had a struggle to face, to be a separate people, dedicating our energies, our living in the effort to honour God. Let us then listen to these words of God, recorded for us through Isaiah, to find the help Hezekiah knew, the strength that Jerusalem knew to stand up against the threats of the powerful adversary. By the power of God, the might of Assyria was over-

whelmed, and Jerusalem delivered from almost certain destruction. It was in these circumstances that Isaiah spoke to our Hebrew brethren. Realising this, the words of Isaiah sustain us in our struggle to get the victory.

“FEAR NOT . . . ”

God knows the needs of every one of His children. He knows what they are like, and so is able to furnish the help required at the time. In Isaiah 43 : 1, we see how God recognised that, as all flesh, Israel was subject to FEAR. We, too, fear, for fear is a human reaction to danger, to difficulty; a powerful emotion which can rob us of judgment, of discretion, of understanding—can make us do things which we would never do were it not for FEAR.

God spoke to Israel and to us in recognition of this.

“Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, *I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.*” (Isaiah 43 : 1).

What a reassurance—“Thou art mine”. “I have called thee by thy name.” If we are aware of the power of God, the justice of God, the righteousness of God, and realise, too, that He has called us to be His; and moreover, knows each one by name, has given us a name in His purpose, then what is there to fear ?

Isaiah continues in verse 2 :

“When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee . . . ”

To pass through deep waters is a fearful experience. Israel, however, could look back to God’s provision for them in the midst of such waters. At the Red Sea, the waters parted, and the children of Israel marched on dry ground, between the towering walls of water, held back by the power of God. At Jordan, under Joshua, again the power of God held back the waters of the river of death, allowing His people to follow the Ark into the Promised Land. Can we put ourselves in their position, as they looked to the right and left; and saw the threatening banks of waters, and heard God say to them, “Fear not . . . thou art mine” ? How real His power, His protection would be to them ! It must be the same for us today, brethren and sisters, for that same power works as truly, holding back all that would overwhelm us and bring us to destruction.

How clearly His help is seen as the king of Assyria and his mighty army sought to overwhelm Jerusalem. We can see the same help on our behalf today as the waters press close, threatening; but if we trust, they are held back by the power of His Spirit. How keenly we feel to need the strength of His words: “FEAR NOT.”

“ . . . when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.”

(verse 2).

When we hear these words of assurance from God, we think of the experience of Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego, who refused to worship the golden idol of Nebuchadnezzar; and as a consequence, were thrown into the burning fiery furnace. Because of steadfastness, they were preserved from the fire, and the God of Israel was glorified in Nebuchadnezzar's eyes. "Fear not . . . thou art mine," must have been their strength, their help in struggling to obey God, and to resist the adversary.

"THE LORD KNOWETH THEM THAT ARE HIS . . ."

How often the words of God, "Fear not . . . thou art mine" have rung out on behalf of His people, to strengthen in their struggles to glorify God in time of testing!

In our portion in II. Timothy we read :

" . . . The Lord knoweth them that are his . . . "

(II. Timothy 2 : 19).

His eyes are upon, His hand is strong on behalf of those whom He has called by name ; to these, He says, "Thou art mine" and so He encourages His children in their agonising to get the victory over their flesh.

In Isaiah's time, that Hand of God was strong on behalf of His children, and strong against Sennacherib's army, His hand will not fail today, brethren and sisters, if we are truly striving to be His children in obedience and love. To such, His words, "*Fear not . . . thou art mine,*" are directed !

What a great blessing, a great privilege it is to be allowed to be His ! With such blessing comes a great responsibility as well. God helps us to understand this in Isaiah 43 : 10—

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord . . . "

What are witnesses ? The word comes from a root meaning *to testify*. Those then who are His witnesses *testify* of God, of His Power, of His righteousness, of His judgment, His mercy, His love, by their lives which reflect in a measure, His qualities. Thus they *testify* that they are His ! Further help is found in Isaiah 43 : 12—

" . . . therefore ye are my witnesses . . . that I am God."

All who are His, all whom He calls by name, *testify* that He is Elohim—that He is mightinesses. Is He not saying, You are testifying of my mightinesses and my powers? We might well ask, How can we do such a thing ? Israel's witness helps us to see how it can be done ; by steadfastness, by the determination to serve God rather than man; to put our trust in Him, even when odds seem overwhelming; when the waters and the fire press close on every hand ! Jerusalem stood against the mighty forces of Sennacherib,

because they knew that God knew them by name, and said to them, "*Fear not . . . thou art mine.*"

We are called upon to stand up against great powers, to testify of HIS Power, HIS mightinesses ! Each one of us has felt in some way the strength of the adversary seeking to overwhelm, to destroy our faith; but where there has been steadfastness for God's requirements, the power of the adversary has been turned back before the Hand of God. We need in such times of trial to remember His words to us : "FEAR NOT . . . THOU ART MINE."

"A CLOUD OF WITNESSES"

In Hebrews 11, our brother, Paul, helps by recording the examples of many brethren who were faithful, and because of their faithfulness, were helped to get the victory, and indeed, were God's witnesses.

Paul continues in Hebrews 12 : 1-2—

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith ; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Jesus was THE witness ; the One who testified fully of God's mightinesses.

As we consider these things, brethren and sisters, let us ask, Are we truly His witnesses ? Are we running with patience the race set before us, and by so doing, are we testifying of Him ? It is not an easy race ; it is uphill, with many obstacles in the way, which try our patience, our endurance, and fill us with fear ; but, as we strive to be His witnesses, we CAN face it with renewed strength each day, often bringing to mind His words, "FEAR NOT . . . THOU ART MINE."

What a help are the experiences of our brethren of old, and the word of God written so long ago; a help for us to become a "vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." This is the work of His witnesses ! Let us take God's help to our hearts, brethren and sisters—and determine to be witnesses that testify by our living that WE ARE HIS.

J. A. DeF.

The Divine Honour given to Sisters

**"LET YOUR WOMEN KEEP SILENCE IN THE ECCLESIAS
 . . . IF THEY WILL LEARN ANYTHING, LET THEM ASK
 THEIR HUSBANDS AT HOME."**

(I. Corinthians 14 : 34/35)

THE Truth is a balance, a delicate balance in determining what is right. Care is needed in "rightly dividing the word of truth." As this is devoutly done, it will be found that some commands prevent a turning to the left ; others avoid a turning to the right. The right way is then clear, fenced on both sides by the Word of God.

As a simple example of this, some may lock up their houses when they go out ; others say they have no need for God has promised His protection. The command on one side is to trust in God, that even His "angels will encompass round about them that fear him;" on the other side, the Word of God is abundantly clear: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." The path marked out ; the way to the submissive servant is to trust without "tempting", for tempting is born of pride. Those who have *boasted* of God's protection, exposing themselves to unnecessary risks have been seen to receive a serious rebuke by events which have transpired.

Now concerning the sisters, as Robert Roberts wrote, they must not be reduced to a cypher, without influence and without help in the Ecclesia; on the other hand the command concerning "sisters" is clear: "Let your women keep silence in the Ecclesia . . . if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home."

Our purpose is carefully to examine this command in the light of Scripture, and ascertain what God would have us understand. There is no higher purpose than this. In doing so we propose to ignore the objectors, who have argued that even if it is a "shame for sisters to speak in the Ecclesia," they may do so during the Meetings of the Ecclesia by asking a brother to speak for them. When it has been pointed out that the command is fortified by the words . . .

"If they would learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home,"

—the retort has been what if they have no husband !

What a short-sighted view of the words of the Apostle, which accuse him of overlooking such a position. No one would have *dared* to speak to the Apostle in this way. He would expect his hearers to look beyond the "letter" of what is written, and from the words find the "Spirit" of the divine teaching. The faithful will be careful in their seeking to do this; the objectors will sullenly

discount any such divinely approved task. To these, the inspired words have no meaning. They are superfluous to God's message, and may as well be torn from the pages of Holy Writ. This article, we know, will be wasted on such; but to humble seekers of truth it will at least be approved in its purpose.

The position of the sister in relation to the brother, is one of divine arrangement, even as God in His wisdom has created both male and female a complement to each other. This relationship is beautifully expounded by the Apostle Paul, even if it is a little difficult to understand at first. Careful seekers will not be put off by this difficulty. They know that difficulties are introduced by God to prove the heart of the seeker; whether his interest is only casual or really earnest. The superficial will never find the hidden treasure as God intended, knowing that such are not worthy of its possession. Only the patient and long-searching seeker, who thus proves the sincerity of his heart, is granted the glimpse of the concealed jewel, and finally may rejoice by the possession of such a treasure. The treasure is a great one, enabling questions to be answered, which to most are enigmas.

Why should the Apostle say sisters should keep silent in the Ecclesia to the extent that if they would "learn anything they must ask their husbands at home"? Why and when should sisters wear a "covering" or hat? Why is it a shame for sisters to be "shorn"? Those who would dismiss these important considerations by such transparent excuses that the Apostle was only writing for those of his own generation, are asked to read no further.

In the blessed position given to women by God, is it nothing more than Gentile convention that they should wear a hat when going into a "place of worship"? How many, or rather how few know the divine reason, why and when sisters should wear a "covering". Those seeking to please God will be moved by the Spirit message through the Apostle Paul, rather than by ignorantly conforming to current custom. So now may we consider what the Apostle has to say in context with his divine instructions, and perhaps it will help if as a pivot to our consideration, we take his words as the next caption :

**"FOR THIS CAUSE OUGHT THE WOMAN TO HAVE POWER
ON HER HEAD BECAUSE OF THE ANGELS."**

(I. Corinthians 11 : 10).

The Apostle shows when the woman must wear a "covering", in addition to her natural God-given "covering" of long hair, both described in the foregoing as a "power".

We must wait a little before going into why these "coverings"

are spoken of as a “power” or “right”, as the original is sometimes translated; why this is so important “because of the angels”.

The reason for the “covering” to be worn given by the Apostle is . . .

“For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.” (I. Corinthians 11 : 7).

In these words, difficult at first to understand, there is concealed the beautiful arrangement whereby the man is to strive to show the glory of God, and the woman is to be a *help-meet* in such a superb work.

This was ordained in the beginning, when God said :

“It is not good that man should be alone; I will make a *help meet* for him.” (Genesis 2 : 18).

“And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”
(Genesis 2 : 21-24).

Herein is projected the great work of God in the development of the *New Creation*. As the woman was created by being taken out of the side of Adam, so those who are to be the Redeemed, spoken of as the *bride*, are in a figure taken out of the side of the second Adam—Christ. For when the side of Jesus was pierced there came out “blood and water”. This was His life, “precious in the eyes” of His Father, and given as a righteous covering to all the seed of the woman.

It must be at once evident, that God intended that the woman should be a *help-meet* in this glorious work, and not merely a domestic servant looking after household chores and the children. This honoured position is given to women called to the Truth, whether married or unmarried. Their calling is no less than helping the man to show the glory of God, but in a particular way which only a woman can do, by complying with the divine injunctions. The Apostle Peter says :

“Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands;

that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives.

While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.

Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel ;

But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

(I. Peter 3 : 1/4).

To these words should be added those of the Apostle Paul :

"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." (I. Timothy 2 : 11/12).

Further the well known words of the Apostle should be kept in mind :

"Let your women keep silence in the ecclesias : for it is not permitted unto them to speak ; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as *also saith the law*.

And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home : for it is a shame for women to speak in the ecclesia." (I. Corinthians 14 : 34/35).

How important it is to recognise that these injunctions are based upon the Law of God given in the beginning :

"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception ; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children ; and thy desire shall be subject to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Genesis 3 : 16 (Margin).

The "subjection" imposed on the woman by the Spirit is not to make her in any sense inferior to the man. Men, who have arrogated to themselves a sense of superiority over the woman, have denied the faith. The "subjection" or spirit of deference by the woman to the man is the means by which the whole Ecclesia may be illumined as to what God requires of both brethren and sisters; a "submitting to one another in the fear of the Lord."

The woman in being entrusted with such a practical exhortation, is greatly exalted in the work of God. Her whole demeanour will be an encouragement and a help. Never will she be guilty of being loud in either dress or speech, but in all her conversation (conduct) will show a "meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price."

Only the woman is in a position to demonstrate fully what is so "precious in the eyes of God", which is to be a power to help the brethren in their bearing and forbearing; to help all to be "clothed with humility," and to "humble all under the mighty hand of God." We know that the Lord Jesus was greatly helped by such godly women, as was also the Apostle Paul who wrote :

"I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel." (Philippians 4 : 3).

THE POSITION OF THE BRETHERN

Parents learn much from their offspring, who in their infancy, by being completely dependent evoke in both father and mother a care and tenderness which is a delight to behold.

In a similar way, true brethren will respond to the deference of their sisters. Never will they assume the attitude of imperious authority, but on the contrary will exert themselves to protect the sisters from the heavy and exacting task of preaching, from the work of contending for the faith, and from the hurtful strife of the enemies of the Truth.

The position of the brethren in relation to sisters, in principle is shown in what God requires of the attitude of the husband to his wife. The Apostle Paul says . . .

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the ecclesia." (Ephesians 5 : 23).

There follows in the words of the Apostle an adequate antidote to any who would think that sisters are inferior and the brethren superior; in showing the work brethren are to do on behalf of their sisters :

"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the ecclesia :

This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the ecclesia.

Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." (Ephesians 5 : 28, 29, 32, 33).

The deference or subjection in the sister will have a powerful effect upon the true brother. He will be constrained, like a father who gives his life for his children, to do the same for all in the Ecclesia. Loving care will not be by compulsion, but will spontaneously arise due to that inestimable virtue of trying to protect and look after the weaker.

Now to look more particularly at . . .

**THE GOD-GIVEN "COVERINGS" SHOWING THE SISTERS
EXALTED POSITION**

The gifts of God to the sisters in this respect are twofold : the long hair and the covering of a hat.

God intended that the woman should always be a woman, delighting in the place God has given to her. This is so much a principle of the Truth that it is an abomination in the eyes of the Almighty for women to assume the position of the man, even by wearing his clothes. The Law of God is explicit on this matter :

"The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God."

(Deuteronomy 22 : 5).

The godly woman was given in the beginning long hair. This was to beautify her in her weakness, and to signify that she was a woman. So in respect of this gift the Apostle Paul says :

"But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering." (I. Corinthians 11 : 15).

The present age has lost the value of this divine instruction. Women are shorn so that they become to look like men, and men grow their hair long so that they can hardly be distinguished from women. An utter confusion of the divine arrangement which is entailing much suffering. The woman has lost all that she values, and used to have, even in the world, in the care and courtesies which were extended to her. The man in aping the woman has become an object of pity and contempt. Whenever the appointments of God are altered then there is sure to follow confusion, shame and sorrow.

No godly woman would ever think of having the glory which has been given to her "shorn", unless she wishes to expose herself to divine condemnation as was the case when Jerusalem was forsaken of her "husband", her "covering" by God, and was told by the Prophet Jeremiah . . .

"Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath." (Jeremiah 7 : 29).

What a warning for those who would cut off the glory given to the woman, which God intended should signify that she *was* a woman, beautified by Him as a creation of His choice.

In addition to the god-given "natural" covering, God also provides another token in the *covering to be worn*. We can see

from the Apostle Paul's remarks that both these coverings are referred to . . .

"But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head : for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man." (I. Corinthians 11 : 5/7).

The wearing of a covering by the woman involves a deliberate act on her part, unlike the letting of her hair grow, and allows her to show her appreciation of the position God has given to her in His work. This act on the part of the woman should mean much to the man or brother, in emphasising that the woman desires to show that submission in a particular way approved of God, helping the brother to do likewise in respect of his Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. Now we are beginning to learn what is the "glory of God." A character from which all the rough and sharp corners have been removed, gentled and softened, careful and compassionate, so that the godly quality of love might shine forth undimmed by the dark and despicable features of the flesh. Meditation upon this exquisite provision of God for His Ecclesia will heighten the appreciation of His gift in the exalted position given to the woman. And will call forth the praise :

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God !

For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things : to whom be glory for ever." (Romans 11 : 33 and 36).

Perhaps we now are in a position to consider why the Apostle described these coverings given by God to the woman as a "power on her head." Obviously a power of God is of extreme importance, and perhaps the following quotations will help us appreciate this :

"But as many as received him, to them gave he *power* to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." (John 1 : 12).

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ : for it is the *power* of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (Romans 1 : 16).

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have *right* (power) to the tree of life." (Revelation 22 : 14).

In the true Ecclesia this *power* or *right* given to the woman will be appreciated in all its godly perspective. It will be seen as exalting her in the work of God, and providing a wonderful lesson to all that the quiet but distinctive qualities of the Spirit might be learned by all, so that the glory of God will shine forth in true splendour.

“POWER ON HER HEAD BECAUSE OF THE ANGELS”

At one time it was thought that the Apostle referred to the immortal angels as the executors of God’s will. A little consideration will show how inappropriate this was because honour must always be given to God and never to the angels. God alone is to be honoured. Who then are the angel to whom the Apostle refers? As is well known the word *angels* means *messengers*, and can be either mortal or immortal messengers. As for example in what the Apostle Paul has to say to Timothy :

“I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect *angels*, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.”

(I. Timothy 5 : 21).

These “elect angels” must be the brethren, who were and still are responsible for preaching the Gospel as God’s messengers. It is the brethren, who in particular are to benefit from the exalted position given by God to the sisters. Their gentleness in submission will have a softening effect upon them in their work making it approximate to that which is the true characteristic of the God Almighty, who through Moses said to Israel :

“My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.” (Deuteronomy 32 : 2).

Could any figure be more sublime to help the mind grasp the true character of the Almighty—firm but ever gentle, right but always beseeching. How thankful brethren are that they have sisters who can help them towards what God requires of them, as heirs together of the grace of life.

GRACE AND DISGRACE

Grace or that which is gracious can only be obtained from God by the inworking of His Spirit. We have been permitted to see the wonderful provision in the office which He has given to the sisters, that both they and the brethren may learn to imbibe the excellent qualities of His grace. This was seen in perfection in the Lord Jesus who was “full of grace and truth.” As we look upon Him, He was never strident and clamorous.. Always kindly and

beseeking to those who might respond, never reviling and when exposed to difficult and provoking circumstances He was often silent. What a powerful example of grace. How blessed we may be as John says . . .

“And from his fulness have all we received, grace upon grace.” (original) (John 1 : 16).

Where the woman or sister becomes clamorous and contentious, loud in either her dress or speech, or dominant in action she immediately destroys the position which God has so graciously given to her.

The writer remembers in the Ecclesia to which he belonged some forty years ago, such a “sister”, who was content to wear a hat during the Meeting, but because the decisions made did not please her, then immediately after the Meeting she tore off her hat and said “Now can I speak.” Such conduct is a denial of God’s appointment and a destruction of a beautiful divine figure causing much suffering in the Ecclesia until it is removed.

Sometimes a question has been asked whether there should be sisters’ classes. Experience has shown that these usually develop the very side in sisters which should be suppressed, and it would seem inadvisable to have such classes.

Having in mind the great honour which has been given to the sisters, that in her spirit of meekness and quietness she might show a characteristic of God to be copied by the brethren, may we look upon the command that she should be silent in the Ecclesia as no longer an arbitrary regulation, but one that is intended to promote the honour of a sister, help for the brethren, and glory to God; seen finally in the Redeemed, not represented as a man, but as a woman, the *bride* of the Son of God.

Pemberton in 1933 and those with them who discussed this matter were either ignorant of or flouted these sublime thoughts, so that not only the Spirit of God’s teaching was denied but also the letter.

W.V.B.

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

“ . . . THE KING OF THE NORTH SHALL COME AGAINST HIM LIKE A WHIRWIND, WITH CHARIOTS, AND WITH HORSEMEN, AND WITH MANY SHIPS ; AND HE SHALL ENTER INTO THE COUNTRIES AND SHALL OVERFLOW AND PASS OVER. HE SHALL ENTER ALSO INTO THE GLORIOUS LAND . . . ”

(Daniel 11 : 40-41).

AT one time the U.S.A. Naval Authorities regarded the Soviet fleet as insignificant, of use only in the psychological effect of impressing Russia's Arab allies. But American leaders are now beginning to view with some concern the build-up of Soviet naval power in the Mediterranean.

Since the Arab-Israel war of 1967 a great change has taken place. The Soviet fleet now numbers between 66 and 68 ships, while the U.S.A. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean stands at 50. Furthermore this recently built Russian Naval force, being modern, has greater striking power and range than the American. After carefully shadowing and observing Russia's latest Naval exercises, officers of N.A.T.O. have voiced the observation that the Soviet fleet is one of the most efficient in the world. The American commander of the Sixth Fleet has described Russia's naval build-up as a major new maritime strategy, intended to aid her political attempts not only to penetrate the Middle East with her influence but also to enable her to assume sway over Africa's northern coast.

The situation is a potentially dangerous one, for in no other sea in the world, as one observer describes it, is there such a mixture of nations with conflicting aims, packed around such heavily worked sea lanes. On an average day, the Mediterranean carries some 3,000 merchant ships, including some 200 Russian vessels. Some in Mediterranean ports, some at sea.

Now the pro-Western Libyan monarch has been deposed by subversive elements, it looks as though the first step towards greater Russian influence on the North African coast has been taken. It seems as though the Western Nations are diplomatically inferior to Russia in such a sphere. Britain has recognised the new Libyan régime, and continues to equip the forces of that country with modern war equipment excusing herself for doing so by saying that

Libya is not in direct military conflict with Israel. But this does not necessarily mean that Libya will continue her friendship with Britain, for her leader has bound himself to the Arab cause by saying he intends to render "everlasting support" to Palestine commando operations against Israel. Indirectly, then he links his country with Russia who is at the other end of the chain formed against Israel. The scripture foreseeing the outcome states, concerning the king of the north, that "the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps" (Daniel 11 : 43). Literally at his heels, following him.

But concerning Egypt the Bible states "the land of Egypt shall not escape, But he shall have power over . . . all the precious things of Egypt." (Daniel 11 : 43). At the present time Egypt appears to be fully allied to Russia and in no danger of a take-over by that power, but behind the scenes there are little indications that things may not be as they seem.

When the Israeli task force crossed the Gulf of Suez on September 9th last and spent nearly twelve hours in Egypt without opposition, it is stated that the news of what was happening took time to filter through to the Egyptian headquarters. In an attempt to cover up such a defence failure 100 Egyptian jet planes took to the air two days later and 11 of them were lost. The Russians, it is said, knew all the details of the raid and the air battles long before the Egyptians, for they have their own network of communications inside the Egyptian forces. It seems as a result, senior Russian advisers and diplomats approached the Egyptian leader in a critical mood, and suggested that he should go to Moscow to present his case. Their intention, according to one source of information, was to arrange a coup d'état in his absence, similar to what had taken place in Libya when the king was overthrown in his absence abroad. But, if this was the case, their scheme was foiled, for the Egyptian leader appeared to take ill during the long and stormy debate with the Russians in Cairo. Now, it is reported, the Egyptian leader has started a purge of pro-Russia officials in Egypt. The chief of staff and the Egyptian Naval Commander have been replaced, with no reasons given for the change.

Meanwhile it appears that Israel is beginning to feel more secure by reason of her successes against the Arabs. A report from Haifa mirrors the situation when it says . . .

"Despite what imaginative Arab propagandists may say, Israel is a safe land, a peaceful land. It is not quiet. It is a land filled with perpetual excitement and drama and thrills. There is emotion and exhilaration around every corner. It is a kaleidoscopic land of ever-changing scenes. And when I

see what race riots, road accidents, organised crime and student revolts are doing elsewhere, I repeat that Israel is a safe, a peaceful land. I have only one regret. You, dear reader, are not here to enjoy it. It appears that you are one of those who have decided to postpone the trip to Israel because conditions are 'unsettled'. The Arab propagandists have scored a victory—over you !”

When such an observation is considered, the question provoked in the mind is one concerning the prophetic description of the latter day scheming of the arch-enemy of Israel . . .

“ . . . I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely (confidently) . . . to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, upon the people that are gathered out of the nations . . . ” (Ezekiel 38 : 11-12).

Is this the situation that now exists in the land ? If so, is the time ripe for the practical carrying out by the adversary of such an intention ?

D.L.

Correspondence

R. Cockcroft (Dawn Christadelphian), Thame, Oxon.

Following a remark by our correspondent that it was possible that some in the Baptists will be saved, which he said he desired to "retract", a question was asked to ascertain whether this really meant a change of belief.

Letter from R.C.—

"Thank you for your letters of the 9th and 22nd July and August 5th.

The best brief answer I can give is that I have discussed with many "Baptists" and I have never yet found one who has 'the truth as it is in Jesus'."

Reply :

"After nearly three months, following three reminders to you, your previous "retraction" of your statement, quoted by R. Stubbs is shown to be meaningless. Why the long delay if you were prepared to give a straightforward answer to a very simple question ?

Now is your "best brief answer" a real answer, or only further evasion ?

Do you or do you not believe your statement that it is possible that some in the Baptists will be saved was wrong, and that "retraction" is no substitute for a scriptural clearing of the wrong, which can only be done by a confession, repudiation and repentance of the wrong as heretical ?

Pemberton sinned in 1933 by failing to confess, repudiate and repent of their wrong. Are you going to do the same ?"

Letter from D. A. Cox, Horley, Surrey.

"A friend from Canada has asked me to put the question to you concerning two statements which you have made which appear to contradict each other.

In the 'History of the Truth', on page 94, it is stated 'that re-marriage by any in the Truth, who might have been divor-

cees before coming to the Truth, could not be considered in the life time of their previous spouse.’

In the ‘Remnant’, November 1968, pages 214-215 ; February 1969, pages 37-38, you claim that I. Corinthians 7 : 27-28 ‘loosed from a wife’ which means just what it says, it should not be necessary to add that the one who is ‘loosed’ was previously bound.

Will you answer why the ‘loosed’ is not free to re-marry in the Truth.”

Reply :

“The answer to your question is that the Apostle is dealing with the position of those before coming to the Truth, as shown in the context of the Article in the “Remnant” for November 1968 :

“Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he is called. But, let every man wherein he is called therein abide with God.” (I. Corinthians 7 : 20 and 24).

Divorce for those in the Truth is against the divine commands; consequently for a divorcee to re-marry after coming to the Truth, while his former spouse is alive would be upholding divorce, and a committing of adultery. (Matthew 19 : 9).

It would seem that you should try to deliver yourself from this distasteful subject, and begin to seek the exalted beauties of the Truth, only to be found in the One Body.

Already, you and those with you have had to change on a fundamental of your teaching. May this lead you to a complete change.”

W.V.B.

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, Buffalo, Hamburg and Orchard Park. Alternate weeks: Revelation Study.

We are grateful for the safe return of the Sisters Glenn from England, and rejoice in the strengthened bond brought about by their visit. The closeness of this bond can only be experienced among those belonging to the Lamb.

Much help and encouragement has been given our Sister Nancy Brown, in her stand at work in refusing to be joined to a union. Provision was sought to enable her to continue her work ; but remain out of the union. After an interview with union officials, this was found to be impossible unless principles were compromised. Sister Brown has resigned her position, and almost immediately found a more suitable one where no union is involved. God's Hand and blessing has been evident, and great gratitude is felt for His mercy.

Brother Steiger continues to wait upon the draft board's decision, in answer to the U.S. attorney's request for some provision for our brother's genuine objections to military service.

J. A. DeF.

Newtownards, Co. Down, Northern Ireland.

Breaking of Bread, Sunday, 11-30 a.m. Sunday School, 2-30 p.m. Bible Class, Wednesday.

We are grateful to Sister Glenn and Sister Hazel for making the journey to Ireland to visit us, and for the helpful and exceedingly pleasant time we enjoyed in their company. It was good to hear of their safe return to the States and of the welcome awaiting them

on arrival. None in the divided sects of Christendom (or the "others") can realise the strength of the bond of love and unity that encloses the One Body, nor the assurance and hope that belief and obedience give. We have been very conscious of the blessings of the Truth in the past months in contacts with our brethren and sisters and in the evidence of our Father's hand to those in need, when united supplication was made for them.

A Special Lecture has been arranged for Saturday, November 8th, in Bangor, when we hope there will be some to hear the Gospel of salvation.

J.P.

Manchester, Memorial Hall, M.A.P.S. Building, Albert Square, Manchester.

Sundays : Breaking of Bread, 11-30 a.m., Lecture 3-30 p.m.

Thursdays : Bible Class, 7-15 p.m., Onward Hall, Deansgate.

Our hearts felt sad to part with our two sisters from the States, Sister Glenn and Sister Hazel, when they left Manchester Airport, on Monday, September 22nd. A cable received next day, telling of their safe arrival, and "Happy welcome by all" was received with thankfulness. The visit undoubtedly helped to bind all here, with those three thousand miles away in the unity of *the* family.

We were grateful for the help of Bro. R. Wood on September 28th, and we have also been pleased to have the company of Sister N. Pinkerton, from Northern Ireland.

The Sunday School Party is arranged for Saturday, October 25th at the Longsight Public Hall, Manchester.

W.V.B.