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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

"Take heed ye be not deceived"

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At the Table of the Lord

“Even My Servant, David”

IT IS REMARKABLE how much can be found in the Word of God concerning David: his life, his spirit, his obedience. He truly was a man “after God’s own heart.” It was Peter, teaching in Antioch, who spoke of David in this way:

“. . . he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will.” (Acts 13:22)

These words of Peter were spoken almost 1,100 years after David’s time. Also, in Acts, we listen to Stephen’s witness before the elders of Israel, a testimony which resulted in his being stoned. He spoke of David:

“Who *found favour before God*, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob.” (Acts 7:46)

There can be no question about David’s position before God, David’s spirit.

Moving to our portion in Ezekiel 34, we have read of God’s promise to restore Israel:

“. . . I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David . . .

“And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it.”

(verses 23 and 24)

God is speaking here first of Jesus:

“. . . a rod out of the stem of Jesse . . . a Branch shall grow out of his roots:” (Isaiah 11:1)

But, was not David a type of Christ? In addition, we believe David will rule as a prince in the kingdom of God with Jesus as the King.

With all this evidence of God’s pleasure in David, with all that is written in His word about David, it *is* God’s desire that we should profit by his example. If we could only be like David, how pleasing to God we would be, truly giving glory to Him!

Let us, then, look to our brother for help in *our* struggle to please the Father. David’s many qualities are recorded for our learning and

example. Today, we are reading in I Chronicles 13 and 14, covering a short time of David's life; but in this brief span, we can perceive much of his mind, and spirit, if we are alert to God's teaching and help.

First, we read of his desire to bring the ark of God up to Jerusalem from its resting place in the house of Abinadab in Kirjathjearim. The ark had rested there since the days of Eli and Samuel — almost 100 years. In David's desire to bring up the ark, he sought counsel from captains and leaders of Israel. We read:

“And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.” (I Chron. 13:4)

We know that *their desire was right*; but, we also know what happened as they did so. The ark was placed upon a new cart, pulled by oxen. Why a new cart? Perhaps it was because David and the elders of Israel knew that the ark of God was holy and felt it should not be carried by a cart which had carried anything else. Perhaps this was good reasoning; but it did not observe the whole counsel of God. It was not carried up in accordance with God's instruction to Israel through Moses, who directed that the ark be placed on staves, after being covered by the sons of Aaron, and then the Levites were to bear it upon their shoulders. This was not done, and so a breach, a hindrance, occurred to David and to Israel — a rebuke — for Uzza was smitten before the Lord. Yet, the record in verse 8 tells us how, prior to this:

“... David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with . . . singing . . . harps . . . psalteries . . . timbrels . . . cymbals, and with trumpets.”

A true rejoicing, for they felt they were doing a right thing — until God intervened and smote Uzza, bringing this breach on all Israel. What was the result of this disaster? Verse 12:

“... David was *afraid of God* that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?”

The fear of the Lord stopped David and Israel, making them ask, What is wrong? Why is God displeased? Is this not a help to us, brethren and sisters? When we are stopped, how do we react? As David, seeking God's help in fear of Him? David could have reasoned that all Israel agreed with me in bringing up the ark — so, perhaps, would have failed to perceive what God was showing. What did he do? He turned to the Word of God, to the Law. We read in I Chronicles 15:2:

“Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the Lord chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever.”

Also, in verse 13, he spoke to the Levites:

“For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God made a breach upon *us*, for that *we* sought him not after the due order.”

There is no other way pleasing to God. Sadly, we all know this from experience. There may be the best of intentions, careful reasoning, right spirits; but if not done “after the due order,” there will be only God’s displeasure and possibly a breach. As the second attempt to bring up the ark took place, what a change!

“And it came to pass, when *God helped the Levites* that bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord . . .” (I Chron. 15:26)

How significant are these words, “*God helped the Levites.*” We find the original for “*help*” gives the thought of “surrounding.” God was pleased by the way His rebuke was received, and encompassed with His presence those who were doing the work “after the due order.”

“Despise Thou not the Chastening of the Lord”

This response of David and Israel to God’s breach reminds us of Paul’s words in Hebrews 12, read this morning:

“. . . My Son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” (verses 5 and 6)

We understand *chastening* as being needed, but what about *scourging*? When we look the word up, we find it means “*to whip*” or “*to flog*”—a drastic action, hurtful to those receiving it. Sometimes it takes a scourging to get our attention, to make us realise a need for correction. This chastening and scourging comes from our Father who loves us, and deals with us as sons. He dealt in that way with David and his people. David did not despise (think little of) that chastening, nor faint when he was scourged; but, rather applied himself to determine what God was teaching him, why God had caused this breach. What an example for us, brethren and sisters! Human nature, the flesh, the natural man—whatever we may elect to call it—does not like chastening, scourging, but quickly rebels against it. Do we not need to put away the impulses of our flesh, thoughts of defence, or blaming others; and, say to God, What is it you want me to change?

It is most striking how David was tested between the time of the breach, when God chastened him and the time of the actual bringing up of the ark unto Jerusalem “after the due order.”

Our portion for today in I Chron. 14 tells us of this testing:

“. . . all the Philistines went up to seek David. And David heard of it, and went out against them.

“And the Philistines came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.” (verses 8 and 9)

David’s natural reaction would be to forthwith go out and fight against these enemies of Israel, believing it a right thing to do. But wait, in verse 10, we read:

“. . . David enquired of God, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? and wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? . . .”

Was David showing that he was, indeed, “afraid of God,” as he asked for help: Am I doing right in going up against these enemies of Israel? Am I overlooking anything? Have I failed to obey, and so please thee? Is there a danger of a breach? Did not David’s spirit reveal that he did not despise God’s chastening, nor faint at His scourging? God’s reply to David was:

“. . . Go up; for I will deliver them into thine hand.” (verse 10)

There was left no question in David’s mind as to God’s will. David *did* go up, and God *did* deliver the Philistines into David’s hands; a great victory for Israel and a reassurance as well that God was pleased.

But wait:

“And the Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.” (verse 13)

How natural it would be for David to go up once again quickly against these enemies of Israel whom he had just defeated, feeling God had already given indication to do so. Wouldn’t the same guidance hold in this second case, he could reason? We read David’s mind:

“Therefore David *enquired again* of God . . .” (verse 14)

And, God replied:

“. . . Go not up after them . . .

“And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee to smite the host of the Philistines.” (verses 14 and 15)

How glad David would be that he *had* enquired of the Lord, instead of assuming it was still all right to go. How pleased God would be with him. David was to wait for the sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, a sign that the power of God, His host was going before Israel to smite the adversary. How hard it is to wait for His indication, for His going before; yet, this is what God requires of us

as a test of our receiving His chastening, and not fainting at His scourging.

This spirit of David has been a great help to us as we perceive his response to God's Hand upon him.

Can we, brethren and sisters, respond? For we so greatly need His help and guidance in a like manner. Doing so, may it be our hope to meet in the Kingdom of God, and to be able to tell him how his example has sustained us in our struggle to be "afraid of God," and thus to honour His Name?

J.A.DeF.

Christendom—and Others—Astray

The Spirit of the Law the Spirit of Christ.

"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." (Psalm 119:18)

THIS WAS THE PLEA OF DAVID, the "man after God's own heart". He knew the Law — which was and is the Spirit of the Messiah — that it contained "wondrous things". There is no law of any nation comparable to the Law given through Moses. This Law scintillates with gems of divine creation, enabling the puny human mind to grasp something of the "beauty of holiness".

It is amazing that Christendom professing to follow the teaching of Him who was the embodiment of the Law, who give sermons from portions which they call "texts", should regard the Law with disdain, if not contempt. There is no wonder Christendom is so bereft of the Spirit of Christ. Indeed Christendom is astray.

While there is no satisfaction in recording that the "others" — those who once had the Truth — no longer regard the Law as having any value for personal or ecclesial life today, this is undoubtedly the case. If the Law is quoted to help, their immediate response is: "We are not under the law but under grace", and will say that the Spirit shown by Christ is different from and superior to the Law. When asked if there are two spirits in God's Word, they hedge, stutter, and try to escape from the question. Many of them see no reason why they should not join Christendom, or at least join with them in what they would call "good works". So numbers of the "others" are disturbed: many of the younger have gone right over to Christendom. The apostasy of those who once had the Truth, and were at one time the "sect everywhere spoken against" is complete.

“Wondrous things out of thy law.”

In the two previous issues we have seen a special wonder in connection with the Law. That the writing of the ten commandments on tables of stone pointed to the work of God with His people for His writing to be on their hearts.

To help, several portions of the Old Testament have the unique feature of being what one might call alphabet writings. This is seen in Psalm 25 wherein each of the twenty-two verses commence with successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. In Psalm 119 the pattern is more obvious. Each of the twenty-two stanzas of eight verses each commence in each verse with the Hebrew letter which forms the heading. This would undoubtedly be a great aid to memory when the written copies of the Law were so few. It would also assist in realising the purpose of God’s writing. As infants are taught today: A is for *apple*; B for *bed*; C for *cat* etc., so in a much higher sense the Hebrew alphabet could be used to recall God’s thoughts on a variety of important subjects. Finally in Proverbs 31 there is the wonderful, although enigmatical, description of the “virtuous woman”, the bride of Christ.

The Lord Jesus gave His seal upon this divine arrangement in the Revelation, when He said “I am Alpha and Omega”, referring to the alphabet of the language in which the New Testament was written. *Alpha* being the first letter, and *Omega* the last. In Him was to be seen all the writing of God, so that He could truly be described as the “Word of God”. This great work was to be wrought in the followers of Christ, for the same purpose, and to the same end as the Apostle Paul shows:

“Ye are our epistle (our writing) . . . known and read of all men.” (2 Corinthians 3:2)

For a time it had not been realised that in the *Lamentations* of Jeremiah the pattern of using the Hebrew alphabet was to be found in each of its five chapters as pointed out last month. As the Ecclesia in the land was within less than twenty-five years of its end this had a special significance, Jeremiah was contemporary with the last Kings. He, doubtless would be impressed by the promising start of Josiah, which did not last, causing him great sorrow.

In the time of King Josiah.

It was early in his reign that a copy of the “Law” of the Lord given through Moses, was found. The reading of this to the king had a dramatic effect, for when he had “heard the words of the law, he rent his clothes.” This abject repentance (not just a “change of mind” be it noted) was accepted by God so that Josiah was promised he

would be spared from the forthcoming destruction, and that he would “be gathered to his grave in peace”. Josiah was responsible for much righteous activity. (Again will *simplicitus* of the Dawn — see correspondence please note). “Fruits meet for repentance” was seen in a vigorous removal of the evil which had become widespread, followed by the keeping in due solemnity and sincerity of the Passover.

But the flesh is weak indeed. The good works were soon spoiled. When Necho King of Egypt came up to fight against Carchemish by Euphrates, Josiah went out against him, Necho remonstrated:

“What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? . . . I come not against thee this day . . . for God commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not.” (2 Chronicles 35:21)

Josiah would not hear, but determined to war he disguised himself and went to join in the fight. Disaster ensued. Josiah was mortally wounded. His disguise did not prevent this.

“*And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah.*” (2 Chronicles 35:25)

Brief is the record of the lament of Jeremiah concerning Josiah, but the depth of grief felt not only by Jeremiah but by many others is recorded:

“And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, . . . and behold they are written in the *lamentations*.”
(2 Chronicles 35:25)

Reference to the inspired words of Jeremiah in the book of *lamentations* must supply some valuable information and help; for nothing is recorded in the divine Word that cannot help. So let us turn to the book and receive the help it can give.

Jeremiah must have experienced extreme disappointment and anguish as the latter Kings of Judah, who should have been examples, as “fathers” of the flock, repeatedly failed. All the efforts of Jeremiah seemed in vain. In his *lamentations* he said:

“Our *fathers* have sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquities.” (Lamentations 5:7)

This verse is indicated as having a special reference by commencing with the seventh letter of the Hebrew alphabet — *Zain*. This would connect with other alphabet writings — in Psalm 25, Psalm 119, and Proverbs 31, affording bro. Jeremiah comfort and help. In Psalm 25:7

“Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgression: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness’ sake, O Lord.”

The Kings, the fathers had gone, either killed or taken captive, but Jeremiah who was accounted as nothing was mercifully preserved. When calamity comes there is bound to be self-examination with a feeling of having failed, but correction will provide God's care and sustenance in trial. This Jeremiah knew. We too, may know.

In the Psalm 119:49-56 is the stanza headed with the connecting letter — *Zain*. How the words of this portion would help Jeremiah in his grief, and can help us:

“Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou has caused me to hope.”

“The proud have had me greatly in derision: yet have I not declined from thy law.”

“Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.”

“I have remembered thy name, O Lord, in the night, and have kept thy law.”

Memory is a remarkable gift, enabling the mind to dwell upon God's working in the past with His people, and with ourselves. This enabled Jeremiah to be sustained in the calamity which had overtaken the Ecclesia in the land; and it can help us as we meet with what at times seem impossible situations. By this means we can be led, like Jeremiah, to deliverance, and it is hoped in the mercy of God to the final deliverance when there shall be “no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither . . . any more pain.”

How delightful, and undoubtedly true is the prospect. God remembers perfectly. He will not fail any who really put their trust in Him.

(. . . to be continued)



“I have made thee a watchman”

IN BEING ALLOWED to view the life and work of the Prophet Ezekiel, are we not moved and caused to wonder at the way God used him to carry out His purpose? We remember that at the time of Ezekiel, there was no nation of Israel as it once existed, but rather Israel was scattered in exile and Ezekiel found himself part of the captive community of Jews which was settled by the River Chebar. It was here that God came to Ezekiel in vision, that the hand of the Lord was upon him with definite intent, and it was through this action of God that Ezekiel responded and moved in the ways which he did, ways which certainly would have been noticed by any who witnessed them.

For example, God made Ezekiel’s tongue to cleave to the roof of his mouth, thus, for a certain period of time, making him unable to speak; but God allowed him to speak later when God came unto him and spoke with him, to direct him to speak to Israel. In another instance, God caused Ezekiel to lie on his left side 390 days, and after that to lie another 40 days upon his right side. We might ask, Why did God require Ezekiel to act in these extraordinary ways? We are told in Ezekiel 4:3:

“ . . . This shall be a sign (an evidence) to the house of Israel.”

By Ezekiel’s conduct, there was to be an evidence given that there was a God of Israel, even in their scattered and sorry condition. we are told, likewise, in Chapter 2, verses 3-5, as God spoke to Ezekiel:

“ . . . Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day.

“For they are impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God.

“And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.”

Ezekiel’s function as a prophet was to be an evidence to the rebellious children of Israel, a people who had come to disregard God and their service to Him.

As Ezekiel’s work was placed before him, and as the methods of accomplishing that work were explicitly shown to him, how great a responsibility he would have felt, knowing that God had entrusted

to his care and keeping such an enormous task, made more demanding by God's words to him in Chapter 3:17-21. As we look at those words, we find Ezekiel was to serve as God's watchman unto Israel in a capacity to warn them, through the speaking of God's *every* word unto them, while knowing full well that if he failed in his responsibility, his brethren's life would be required at his hand.

Would not Ezekiel, upon coming to the realisation of the vast importance and the consequences of his work, be caused to feel a fear and an anxiety? a fear of failing and the agony he knew he would suffer in having to inflict upon his flesh so great a restraint, knowing that his flesh would cry out because of the severe trials and difficult situations which lay ahead of him during his watch. Have we not also felt that same anxiety and harboured that same fear in the trials and circumstances which confront us at times? Indeed, we have and do feel such; therefore, we can be helped and encouraged by the record of Ezekiel, for it serves as a reminder, a means of bringing to remembrance that the fear and anxiety we at times so sorely feel is on account of the fact that *we* too, each and every one of us, are given by God certain and similar responsibilities as was Ezekiel — to watch over that which God has entrusted to our care.

As we reflect upon Ezekiel's work in an attempt to relate it in a measure to that of our own, we are clearly shown it is our responsibility to watch, not only over our own individual fleshly tendencies, but also to keep a watch over one another. It is an easy thing to say we are to be watchmen, but in such a watch, what are we required to be like? What are our duties? Really, our question might better be put, What does God look for in His watchmen?

We are helped to consider this by going to Proverbs Chapter 8:34, where we read:

“Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.”

Here, the qualities are pointed out which God looks for in those who are struggling to be watchful over the things which are *His*.

Must hear

The first of these is that ability of being able *to hear*, of allowing the Word of God, whether it be through our portions, through indication, or through other brethren and sisters, to enter into our watch, thus making a difference in the way we move. This requires a sensitivity on our part, a willingness and a desire to want to be led and to be shown what we are to do as the Spirit dictates, what our witness must be, really a recognition that we need to hear, to watch carefully that we follow that which the Spirit gives rather than to go

off attempting to do things on our own, thus failing to restrain our flesh.

Must watch daily

The second quality is that of “watching daily at my gates,” giving the implication that there is a need for an alert enduring, an importunity in watching. How difficult we know it is to be on guard at all times; yet, this is what God requires and looks for in us. We, at times, feel as David’s words express:

“I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top.”
(Psalm 102:7)

To feel as such can be a danger, for it can give way to the temptation to give in, to cease to resist, to take the easy way out; however, to let the guard down would reveal a failure to display that quality of hearing we are to reveal, for we are told not one sparrow is forgotten before God and that His called, those called to be watchmen, “are of more value than many sparrows.” This reassures us that God knows His watchmen and does care for them, providing all that which is daily essential for our watch, but only as He sees in us an enduring desire to be alert over the things which are His.

Must wait

The third quality is that of “waiting at the posts of my doors.” This involves and requires patience, knowing the flesh in us is not patient by nature, so it attempts to instil a false sense of urgency, a feeling that something will be missed, or won’t turn out as we want it to, unless we take action, unless we move right away toward the goal we desire. How contrary this approach is to the moving of the Spirit as the words of Jesus bring out in Luke 12:37 and 38, telling us that:

“Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching

“And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.”

How true it is that we know not the hour when the judging of our work as watchmen will come; therefore, how necessary it is to keep the intensity of our watch at all times, so as to be waiting with, and in the patience God will bless.

Must love

We are further helped by David in Psalm 127:1, where we read:
“. . . except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”

These words place in proper perspective the keeping of our watch, for

we must realise that we, of ourselves, are not capable of keeping a watch unless God works with us, for it is only by such that our watch can hope to be successful. How important this lesson of submission and subjection is to learn, for without such an understanding, our attempts to show forth the qualities of a watchman would be in vain. Can we see the love that God directs toward His watchmen, a love which comes along side to help us, to serve Him acceptably? Ezekiel knew this love, for we read in Chapter 4:8:

“ . . . I will lay bands upon thee, and thou shalt not turn thee from one side to another, till thou hast ended the days of thy siege.”

These bands were of love, given to Ezekiel to constrain him in the work God had given him. Paul exhorts us in regard to this in I Corinthians 16:13 and 14, to:

“Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.
“Let *all* your things be done with love.”

In all the things we are required to do as watchmen, they must be done out of love, a reflection of the love by which God constrains us; therefore, we are given a foundation upon which our watch must be made.

The qualities of a true watchman, the ability to hear, to be continually alert, to be patient, to submit — these same qualities Ezekiel was required to reveal in his watch, can only be done acceptably out of such a *true* love. It is difficult to be such a *true* watchman, for it is a way of life which demands much, but our work can be accomplished just as Ezekiel’s was if we, like him, place our trust in God and His abiding love.

We must take to heart our responsibility as watchmen over the things of God, and from the heart allow to flow the love by which we must do all things as we wait and watch for God’s hand to be revealed.

M.C.S.



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

“...Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” (Daniel 12:4)

HOW CLEVER the learned of this world appear. With their years of study followed by intellectual achievements. Certainly knowledge has been increased, but what sort of knowledge?

It is profitable to remember what the spirit has to say about worldly wisdom:

“Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.” (I Corinthians 3:18-20)

There has been a sad report in the national press recently of a teacher of religious education at a large Comprehensive School being dismissed. He had been teaching the Book of Genesis on a literal basis. The school's board of governors objected. They required the Old Testament to be conveyed in harmony with evolutionary theories. The teacher stood his ground pointing out that even amongst some scholars there was consent for what he had been doing, quoting that “The Creation Research Society of America, composed of fully qualified scientists, believes that the universal floods took place and that they account for the many fossils being found...” Local Government officials later upheld the findings of the school's board of governors.

The writer of this article is caused to reflect upon a visit to some caverns in the Yorkshire Dales when he was but a teenager. Joining a party of sightseers at the entrance to a cave, he found himself conducted through the underground maze by a guide speaking with a polished, educated accent. The stalactites and stalagmites were marvellous to behold, illuminated by electric lamps at various stages of the tour. With the cultured voice of learning, the guide went on to explain most carefully how the caverns had been found, and what treasures of the past they contained. “Here we were beholding rock

formations in the limestone, hundreds of thousands of years old, for the stalactites and stalagmites, formed by small droplets of water containing minute particles of limestone dripping from the roof of the cavern took ten thousand years to grow but one inch." The mind was caused to boggle at the age of these formations, and the length of time they had been growing, for some were quite thick and six feet long or more. Thinking of the Genesis account, it is recollected there was some reflection in the mind on an idea that perhaps all this had been going on long before Adam and Eve, in some mysterious hidden way.

Years later a further expedition was made to a well known Derbyshire cavern. There was no guide in the conventional sense of the term this time, but a young lady did lead the party and reminded them of recent historical associations; of people who had lived in the cave, or visited it during the previous centuries. The writer was startled to observe stalagmites growing upon certain underground iron railings with a Victorian appearance about them. Stalagmites of an inch or more in height, and remembering the instruction in his youth had to come to one of two conclusions. Either the iron railings must easily be the oldest in the world, and if so the text books concerning the date of the coming of the iron age were well out, or what he had been told previously was sheer nonsense, however nicely and intellectually it had been expounded.

Recently it was gratifying to read the following press report:

"The famous Poole's Cavern, near Buxton, which re-opens to the public at Easter after being closed for eleven years, has disproved the theory that stalagmites take thousands of years to form . . . Experts had been astonished to find that stalagmites, which grow upwards had formed on the footpath of the thousand foot long cavern. There is a theory that they grow an inch something like every ten thousand years, but here we have had stalagmites forming two or three inches high in eleven years."

So the footpath, untrodden by parties of sightseers for eleven years, and therefore undisturbed, had revealed the lie. Unfortunately there was no mention of the iron railings and whether the vigilance of the cavern's keeper had been wanting in my time, in failing to knock from a section of the aforementioned railings certain stalagmites which had obtruded themselves.

Men are very extravagant with their dating assessments. To hand recently has come the following report:

"If you occasionally wake up feeling about three million years old, try not to worry about it: you are. In fact we are all a lot older than we thought according to fossils found recently.

A little old lady . . . has told us most. Her three-million year old skeleton was dug up in Ethiopia and shed new light on our early origins . . . the discovery of a family's bones has helped push man's antiquity further back than anyone ever thought. The family — two or three adults and some children, one aged about three — were drowned in a flash flood while they were resting in a desert gully in Ethiopia; when the first rains came, a wall of water thundered down on them and they probably never knew what hit them. . . . Dr. — also discovered hand bones — the oldest and most complete specimens ever found in Africa — which were just as capable as our hands at using tools.”

This is the sort of explanation which religious denominations large and small accept without a demur. Listen to what a dignitary of the popular church has to say:

“ . . . No one knows why — or how — anything was created. Some people suggest creation is a continuous process: others suggest there was a sudden beginning. Then again there is a difference of opinion as to what lies at the heart of creation. Is there a living “personalness” we call God, who began the creation process and continues working within it, always creating? Or did it all happen by chance, through some impersonal forces of which we know nothing? I believe God is the best hypothesis, and this is what the Bible says. Without taking literally as scientific fact the first chapter in the Bible, it is clear that in the writer's view there is the living creative mind of God at work from the very beginnings of things.

This chapter really is a kind of poem describing in beautiful picture language the various stages by which this world and all the life within it has evolved and moved forward until at last man came as the crown of all creation The ‘why’ of creation I do not know, but the ‘responsibility’ after creation entrusted to me I must accept.”

Here is evidence of the usual indecisive pronouncements of the popular clerics. They claim to be ministers of religion, spokesmen for the word of God, but what an admission, they do not know “the ‘why’ of creation”!

Some six or seven years ago mention of a rather startling discovery was made. But very little publicity was given to it:

“According to scientists, the brontosaurus — a great dragon-like creature weighing thirty tons, and about sixty feet in length roamed the earth millions of years before the first man appeared on it. But now a report from Central Africa claims

that an explorer has discovered a cave with wall-paintings depicting this long-extinct monster! The paintings, it is estimated, must have been done by bushmen, who were cave-dwellers about three thousand years ago. The bush-men always drew things they had actually seen, so how could they have seen a brontosaurus if it had been extinct millions of years before? That the brontosaurus roamed Africa in pre-historic times has been proved by fossilised remains which have been discovered. A mystery isn't it?"

There is of course no mystery if the simplicity of the Bible teaching is accepted with faithful realisation that God has created this earth, and for a purpose; which purpose is revealed in His miraculously preserved word. But scientists have a stake in the textbooks which they have written, they also have a pride and status which they must endeavour to uphold. Great financial loss and prestige would be incurred if all the scientific text books were scrapped. Mention could be made of a scientific argument that has arisen in recent years over whether or not (according to the theory) the succession of glacial and inter-glacial periods in the Pleistocene era were in phase or out of phase in the two hemispheres. One who entered into the debate made the following significant comment:

"... If I am cynical about how the experts will react... it is because I know the tenacity with which views are adhered to, once stated."

What an admission! How revealing too, that in a study of the life of the author of "Evolution", it has been stated:

"Darwin's method, ... was never to 'look at all the evidence' and seek a theory, but to start with an inspiration and look for objections... no better example than Darwin exists to prove that the inductive image of science is a figment of philosophy... Darwin was as intuitive as an artist, but as hard-headed as the best of them, and a virtuoso in the use of the preconscious as a source of ideas to compare with the evidence."

Well, knowledge has increased, even as the Bible foretold that it would; but it is the knowledge of foolishness. Little wonder then the time factor in the plan of creation finds no place in modern day thought. Hence the world is asleep as to what is stealing upon it. As the scriptures declare:

... the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night ..."
(I Thessalonians 5:2)

D. L.

Correspondence

To Arthur Gibson, Manchester.

It is noted in the current issue of the *Testimony* you make certain comments on an article entitled “Fulfilled Prophecy — a Pillar of Christian Evidence.”

The writer of this article is, perhaps as you know, a member of the *Advocate* group.

Do you recognise such an one as in the Truth, when he belongs to a group denying Clause 24 of the Birmingham Amended Constitution. The late Editor of the *Christadelphian* declared that he would not be responsible for “baptising” such an one. (vide *Christadelphian* September 1968 page 412)

Where do you stand? With the Birmingham *Amended* Constitution or not?

W. V. B.

From “Simplicitus”, St. Albans.

“Accept my sincere regrets that I feel the need to write you anonymously, and trust that you will not refuse me on that account. My only desire is that The Truth may prevail, as in the end it will. I simply ask that you will accept this in a spirit of reasoning together. . .

In “The Remnant” for November 1976, your contributor D. Lancaster condemns the Pemberton meeting back in 1932/3, saying, “they were in *unrepentant* error. By a further quotation from his article, “unrepentant” is seen as meaning, “there was no *expression* of a repentant spirit, and no asking for forgiveness, for all the distress caused.”

May I respectfully point out to you as Editor, that this perpetuates an error of judgment. . . . Such misjudgment is based on a misunderstanding of the word “repent” in the Scriptures.

This error comes about through taking its *English* meaning and usage, instead of its original Greek connotation. In *English* it does mean “to feel contrite”, or “to be penitent” as the root of our English word is the Latin “poenitere”, and the French “repentir”. But this is *not* the meaning of the original Greek word “metanoes”, and that is what really matters to us all. This Greek word means “to think

differently or afterwards" i.e. "to reconsider". The word is from the root "noieo" — "to exercise the mind" (Strong's Exhaustive Concordance)

Scriptural repentance is therefore simply "a change of mind."

Now that is precisely what Pemberton did! That is what their resolution expresses: "Whatever may have been our position in the past . . . we now believe the Scriptural command of the Apostle Paul forbids sisters speaking in the mixed assemblies of the Saints including Business Meetings and Bible Classes."

I repeat, this may not appear to meet the *English* notion of a "repentant spirit", but it fully expresses Christ's requirement for a "change of mind."

The Pemberton resolution, who instead of reciting an "atonement for their guilt", as demanded by those at "Corn Exchange", did the right thing. They changed their minds and thenceforth kept the commandment. That is scriptural *Repentance*."

Reply:

A Dark Cloud over the "Dawn".

While appreciating the tone of this appeal, although we would prefer it were not anonymous, it is important to show that scriptural repentance requires more than a "change of mind". "*Fruits meet for repentance*" are essential as seen when John (the Baptist) refused to baptise the Pharisees. Let us see what the God of heaven requires, rather than try to explain the meaning of repentance by reference to the English, French, Latin or Greek.

"Fruits meet for Repentance."

These are shown in both the Old and New Testaments to be more than a "change of mind", or a perfunctory expression of sorrow. They require not only a change of mind, but a *change of heart*, as seen in David who said:

"The sacrifice of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite *heart*, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Psalm 51:17)

What a world of difference there is in a transgressor who, instead of just saying he has "*changed his mind*" reveals a "*contrite heart*". In the first case there is no acknowledgement he has sinned; whereas in the second this humble and humiliating confession is evident.

Pemberton did say — in effect they had "*changed their mind*"; but never acknowledged their sin in passing a resolution that sisters could speak at certain ecclesial meetings in defiance of a divine command that sisters must be "silent". If Pemberton had confessed their sin,

they would have supported those who withdrew from the majority. Instead of which they condemned this righteous action. The leaven was not confined to Pemberton.

The writer was witness at the time of what took place in another meeting. A dominant sister made a farce of the command by apparently keeping the letter, but flagrantly denying the spirit. Following Pemberton's evil subterfuge she would pass papers for her husband to read out. Due to either the bad writing or the husband's ineptitude he would have to be corrected when making her announcements. It was indeed a farce, the husband appearing as a marionette. Her son wrote in her defence:

“Suppose the Ecc., a small one — met in a small room — perhaps a house, for Bible Class or Business Meeting where quiet conversation could be heard by all — a sister could *from her seat*, ask a *short question*, or move a short resolution or second it quietly.”

This letter was published in our Magazine to show how the leaven had spread. No one on behalf of Clapham came forward to express or denounce this further disobeying of the divine command.

And so when the name “*Dawn*” came to be chosen, it was not as a clear shining after rain, but one that was darkened with thick clouds; clouds of wrong view on fellowship particularly, the claim having been made that it was possible to be accepted at the Judgment, irrespective of which sect of the twelve Christadelphian groups the one came from! So the question which has never been answered: “Then why be divided?” If as the fallacy implies that Christ must be with each group, then if such are fit for Christ's fellowship, why should they not be for all? Rather than claiming that separation in fellowship is necessary because of some wrong doctrine? It is obvious that once the clear straight path of Truth is left, then the way is indeed dark and tortuous, and never shining with the light of *dawn*, whatever is claimed.

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. Alternative Week: Revelation Study.

As God's hand continues to work with His house, blessing where a right mind and spirit is seen, hindering where there is lack of perception or response, we rejoice at His care. When we realise how prone we are to all the weaknesses of the flesh, how grateful we are that there is One who overlooks, whose judgment is sure and righteous. Let us strive together to submit to that hand rejoicing at the privilege.

J. A. DeF.

“PENTRIP”, Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread: Sundays, 11.30 a.m.
Bible Class: Mid-Week.

Our thoughts are with the Brethren and Sisters both far and near. The winter still being yet upon us it is a quiet time for us, but we continue with our studies and are finding much help in the writings of the pioneers as well as in the magazine.

We know this is a time of trial but are convinced that none will be lost whose heart is given to that simple steadfastness which He requires.

per D. L.

MANCHESTER: Ryecroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, Manchester.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread: 11.30 a.m.
Lecture on the first Sunday in the month at 3.30 p.m.
Bible Class: 7.30 p.m. in the above room Friday evenings.

In proclaiming the gospel — the only good news there is — it was thought wise to have the lecture on the topical prevalence of fear. This was:

“H.M. Government has issued to all health authorities orders in the event of H- war.”

“No hope of medical care and population advised to stay at home — if they still have one.”

Come and hear what the All Mighty has to say, which gives hope and comfort.

There has been some interesting correspondence from members of the *Dawn* group apart from what is published in this issue; also from the “*Old Paths*”.

W. V. B.