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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 REMNANT – PART 6"
(The only magazine contending for the faith)

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At the Table of the Lord

“The Lord is there”

THERE IS MUCH WRITTEN in the word of God concerning David, probably more than is found concerning Abraham, Moses; perhaps as much as Jesus, Himself, although all of the word of God is of Jesus as the promised Messiah. We know of David’s spirit, of his love for God, of his victories, and of his failures. His life can be an example, and a help as we seek to be like him — a man or woman “after God’s own heart.”

This morning, we are reading of his mind and spirit as his reign over Israel was coming to an end, as his life was almost over. In these last days, he remained that man after God’s own heart. Many kings in Israel and Judah, even Solomon his own son, started out pleasing to God, but as power, riches, influence, wives, many things began to come first in their lives, the zeal, the spirit of truth, was lost. Not so David, as he called all Israel together at the end of his reign. What was his purpose in calling this assembly of the princes, the chief men, the stewards and the mighty men? It was to remind them of God’s promises which would bring blessing, peace, and joy to Israel if they were faithful. It was to exhort them, to remember the Lord their God, and it was to encourage Solomon to do the work which David was not allowed to do because he had been a man of war.

We cannot help but be impressed by how much David’s mind and heart was toward this house which he so fervently desired to build. He arranged for singers, porters, priests, Levites, judges, stewards over the treasures of the house. He provided for every possible need, not just from the treasures of Israel, but of his own riches and possessions. All This reveals to us how great was his love for God and for God’s house, an example for us today, brethren and sisters.

In I Chron. 28:2, David’s words were:

“. . . I *had in mine heart* to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord”

It was, indeed, in David’s heart, and as a consequence, while he was not permitted to build that house, he was given the pattern thereof and was allowed to prepare all in every possible way. This enabled him to look ahead to the time of the actual building by Solomon. But, much more: it would inspire him to look ahead to the building of God’s house, the house “not made with hands” when Jesus, *the* Son of David comes to fulfill all God’s promises.

We are helped to see how clear that hope, that house was to David.

“All this, said David, the Lord made me understand *in writing* by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.”
(verse 19)

It was given in writing so he could look upon it, could reflect upon it, having it in his heart and mind. And, as the need to refresh his mind arose, he could study it again and again, until it became a part of him, a sustaining hope, and consequently, a work he took upon himself, involving his time, his thoughts, his riches, his energy, his hopes, and always his great care.

Let us stop to consider for a moment, brethren and sisters. We, too, are privileged to have that pattern in writing, the word of God provided for our help. The record may not be as complete, as detailed as David saw it, but it is more than sufficient. It was given, not only to David, but also if we go back to Exodus, to Moses' time, we are allowed to see the pattern of the tabernacle. Going forward to Ezekiel's time, as we have been reading recently, we see the pattern of a future house revealed. In the study of the Revelation, we can see this pattern repeated. Here at different times, different men saw the same pattern, the same house, the same divine promise held out. What was there about these men that caused God to give them the plans of His house? If we can discern this, perhaps our minds can be helped to be closer to that house, to see it more clearly, to join in its work more fully.

I Chron. 29:2-3 helps us to see David's spirit:

“... I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God....

“... because I have set my affection to the house of my God....”

This makes clear what part this house occupied in David's life and why God blessed him, allowing him this work. It reveals why God made promises to David, to be fulfilled surely when Jesus returns to bring about the “sure mercies of David.”

We remember, too, Jesus' affection set upon the house of God seen in John 2 when He drove out the money changers and those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, and said:

“... Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.” (verse 16)

Would we not feel that the pattern of that house was clear to Jesus? Indeed, we read:

“... The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.” (verse 17)

Jesus was consumed with that zeal for His Father's house, even as were David, Moses, John, Ezekiel. Why would this be so? Was that house so real, so close, so near to their heart because they *did* set their affection on it? That word which David used to describe his love for God's house is also used as, "to delight" or "to take pleasure in". An example is found in Psalm 102:13-14:

"Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion. . . .

"For thy servants *take pleasure* in (set their affection on) her stones, and favour the dust thereof."

The stones of that house, Zion, are being prepared away from the site of its building, being shaped, fitted, smoothed to conform to the corner stone, and finally will be assembled into a building fitly framed together as we read in Ephesians 2:19-22:

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Certainly Paul must have seen the pattern of that house; and we, too, through their eyes, their words recorded, can perhaps begin to discern it more clearly, helping us to "take pleasure in her stones" — those who are being cut, fitted, shaped to fit into that pattern, that eternal house.

Can we see why God found it necessary through His prophet Haggai to encourage our brethren? For, in Nehemiah's time, during the building of the temple, the prophet tells us, Haggai 1:2:

". . . This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built."

How easy it is to get into such a frame of mind, but not if our affection is set upon that house, not if the pattern is in our heart, our mind, motivating our hands as we labour in preparing for its building. Haggai continues (verse 8):

"Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and *I will take pleasure* in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord."

Can we better understand David's zeal, his affection for the house of God? Can we enter into his prayer (I Chron. 29:16-19):

"O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build

thee an house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own.

“I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and *hast pleasure in uprightness* . . .

“O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel . . . keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee:

“And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart . . . to build the palace, for the which I have made provision.”

A full heart, a heart truly setting its affection on the house of God, clearly discerning the pattern and the great holiness. David's great care did not end when he finished his particular work, for there was a continued involvement in that house, in the people of God: in their spiritual welfare, their weaknesses, and their strengths. He never ceased to be aware and watchful for the future of God's house.

How helpful for us and yet more help is found as we have read today in Ezekiel, where we see the pattern of that house of God yet to be established. We study this and are helped by so doing to discern some of its glory. But, as we do so, brethren and sisters, do we, as David, have it in our hearts, realising how much we need that house and the God of Israel who dwells in it? In Ezekiel 47, we read of the waters which proceed out of the altar, flowing to the east, and finally going out under the east gate, the gate of the prince. These waters, we are shown, provide for the healing of the nations. There are trees growing by them, nourished and fed by these waters. The fruit of these trees is to be for meat and the leaves are for the healing of the nations. Verse 12 tells us that all this is possible.

“. . . because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary . . .”

How telling of what that sanctuary is, what it is for, the sustaining and healing of all people! Let us consider: our lives, our probations, have been arranged by God to show us how weak and failing we truly are, as is all flesh. This realisation comes through suffering and trial; and with it, the yearning to be healed and sustained. The time will surely come when all whose hearts can be touched will seek His healing, and we hope to be part of that house from which it flows. Do we value these patterns given to David, to Moses, to Ezekiel, to John, to Paul, to us? Do we set our affection on the house of God, and as evidence of that affection, give wholly of our living, our time, our strength, our resources, indeed, whatever we possess for that house? Does the zeal of that house eat *us* up?

Perhaps one last thought left for us by the Spirit can help us in that determination. In Ezekiel 48:30-35, we are shown the pattern of the city of God, and the final description of that city is found in verse 35:

“. . . and the name of the city from that day shall be, *The Lord is there.*”

In that house, in that city, there the Lord *is*, David, realising this, set his affection on it and ordered his life to that end. God through Ezekiel promised destruction against Mt. Seir. Why was this to be?

“Because thou hast said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it; whereas *the Lord was there:*” (Ezek. 35:10)

As long as the Lord is there, none shall possess it; none shall destroy it.

Once again in Isaiah 33:20-21, prophecy can help us:

“Look upon Zion (see the pattern of it), the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.

“But *there* the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers (as seen flowing out of the altar) and streams. . . .”

David saw in the pattern, this hope: “The Lord is there.” Do we, brethren and sisters? and can it sustain and inspire us unto the end?

J. A. DeF.



“The Remnant” — The only Magazine contending for the Faith. (Part 6)

STRICTLY, the next magazine in order of publication to examine would be the *Advocate*; but it is perhaps better to deal first with the magazines issued by the main body of Christadelphians: *The Dawn*, *The Old Paths*, *The Testimony* and *The Endeavour*; and later examine the *Advocate* and the *Logos*.

The Dawn.

This magazine came into existence as the *Berean*, but following a dispute over “divorce” in 1941, the name was changed to *The Dawn*.

The cover of this magazine makes a high claim:

“A Christadelphian monthly publication devoted to the defence of the Gospel, edification of the household of faith and to maintaining purity of fellowship.”

No fault could be made with such a claim. The question is whether it is supported by this sect in their actions. The doctrine of fellowship requires separation from all evil, and from those who though not guilty of the evil, condone it. This is made clear by the spirit in a number of familiar passages:

“For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?
and what communion hath light with darkness?”

(2 Cor. 6:14)

A little meditation on these words will repay much, for it is evident in the view of the Spirit, that *unrighteousness* is equal to *darkness* in which there is no hope.

The “unrighteous” frequently make claims of having *the Truth*, but this is shown to be false by their *tolerance* of other sects who have views entirely opposed to their own, and, of course, to scripture.

One important member of the *Dawn* said he believed some baptists might have the Truth, but when this led him into trouble he watered it down by saying — “he had not yet met a baptist who had the truth”. Obviously he was not prepared to confine members of the Body of Christ to the Body to which he belonged.

The Epidemic in failing to deal with error.

Those believing they are right are quick to point out any error in opponents, hoping to establish the basis for a discussion of what is right. Ask any Churchman, Chapel-goer, Baptist or Christadelphian about their position because of manifest error. The usual reply from

the conscientious is that they are aware; and endeavours are being made to put matters right. They believe it would be wrong to leave the body: in the words of many *Christadelphians* it would be like leaving a sinking ship. The divine declaration is ignored: "a little leaven leaveneth the whole . . . purge out therefore the old leaven." Instead of obedience to this command, they set themselves the impossible task of trying to convert the leaven. Impossible indeed. Leaven is that state of error beyond repentance, and that is why God is so explicit. These thoughts are not palatable to the human mind, who would have all men at last to receive life, but it should be remembered that God has said:

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."
(Isiah 55:9)

Philosophy and vain deceit will ever find an excuse for not obeying divine commands, but at what a cost; death instead of life. In the case of error, unrepented error in the midst of a body, there is only one thing to do: follow the divine command:

"Come out from among them, and be ye *separate*, saith the Lord." (2 Cor. 6:17)

In this respect it is not difficult to show that the *Dawn* community are in darkness, in spite of their great claim printed on the cover of their magazine. Their "separation" is only technical. They believe it is possible to enter the kingdom through one of the many other groups of *Christadelphians*, a belief like that in *Christendom* who claim there are many ways into the kingdom.

The Evil inherited by the Dawn.

Just as springs feed the rivers, the purity of those depends upon these springs. In Wales there is a mountain called *Plynlymon* meaning "five springs". The climb is easy and with the help of a guide the five springs can be located: the sources of five bountiful rivers including the *Dee* and the *Wye*. These rivers depend on the purity of these springs as they flow through meadows and hamlets providing pure nourishment to man and beast. If a spring — say an "iron spring" — is the source the waters are undrinkable and fail to provide the essential water, so necessary to life.

The *Dawn* was the successor of the *Berean*, and only changed the name when they divided from those who thought divorce was permissible. The "father" of the *Berean*, and it may be said of the *Dawn* was one who did a great work for the brethren in the first world war; one the writer greatly admired. So much so that in the meeting to which he belonged he proposed at a *Business* meeting that he should be invited to a *Special* meeting of the *Ecclesia* to give

an address on the deliverance of the brethren during the war. The proposition carried, but personalities in the Arranging brethren were opposed to the idea, so that it was not difficult for them to carry out the letter of the proposition by offering dates which were not convenient, and declining dates offered in return as being unsuitable, so the proposition never came to anything.

In the 1923 division this same brother took a leading part, often with violent criticism of the main body of Christadelphians. This is how in the division which ensued the Bereans came into existence.

Looking back it is evident that this brother was most disappointed at the relative few who responded to the call to separate although as he stated this was essential for maintaining the purity of the Truth. His disappointment must have eaten into his soul, and caused profound chagrin, causing him to do an about turn so that he published a statement in 1927 which violated the good, previous divisions had established. In it he said:

“When I first embraced the Truth in 1875 (and by the Truth I mean the First Principles set out in the Birmingham Statement of Faith) there was, to my knowledge, but one community holding those First Principles as a Basis of Fellowship. That community was known as, ‘Christadelphian’ then, a despised, albeit a happy and united little flock. In those far off days, to withdraw, or be withdrawn from that community whose Headquarters were in Birmingham, was in the mind of the writer, *to be outside the One Body of Christ!* Now, however, there are at least twelve Fraternities calling themselves Christadelphians, and yet each refusing to fellowship the other eleven!

The division of the original body has led me to take a *wider view than I did in 1875*, for I am convinced it is more than possible that those on the ‘right hand’ in the Day of Judgment, will include some from each of the said divisions, notwithstanding their present separation.”

Thus at one stroke, this erstwhile leader, destroyed all the good that past divisions were to establish for the purity of the Truth, and this poison that all *Christadelphians of whatever sect may have a hope* has poisoned the stand of the *Dawn*, who are prepared to regard all Christadelphians (and some others) as brethren of Christ, with the hope this confers.

We do not wish to be unfair. If we have been unjust in stating the position of the *Dawn* then let them say, and their views will be published. With this in mind copies of this magazine are being sent to the leaders of the *Dawn*.

(to be continued)

His Peace

God has declared:

“Fury is not in me: who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together.

Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me.” (Isaiah 27:4-5)

GOD IS A GOD OF PEACE, His great and wonderful attribute; but the flesh will not have peace! Therefore it has to be brought down and broken, and made to submit. If there is submission in the right way, peace, and therefore unity, is achieved. If the flesh does not submit to His working it has to be prevailed against according to His will, for the preservation of His Truth.

It is profitable to consider that David, a man beloved of God, was a man of war, valiant for the Truth, who put to flight the armies of the alien. Those who do not understand the holiness of God, and the ways of God, might feel that David was too much of a warrior. But then we have to consider, where would the Truth have been if David had not been a warrior, moreover a warrior who had been helped greatly by God.

But God’s work really, is a work for peace, with its joy, its fellowship, its kindness and its love. But this peace can only be achieved by keeping out that which would prevent peace. Peace at any price, or submitting to evil for the sake of peace, is not peace. For while ever the evil rules through others submitting to it, how can that be called peace? Certainly it cannot be called the peace of God. But we are considering what God has declared of Himself:

“Fury is not in me.”

Because of this very meaningful phrase we are shown in an underlined manner, the very basic principle of God’s character, highlighting His fundamental purpose, to give peace to those who are His. This is so even now in a measure, though at times we undergo trial and much trouble.

His way defined.

“Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people: As for me, I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building:

“But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou has been a man of war, and hast shed blood.” (1 Chron. 28:2-3)

Perhaps David was disappointed that he could not do what was his heart's desire, for the worship of his God. But his spirit was right, no complaint. Just a basic explanation, why he refrained, even though he had much material to do it because of the spoil gathered to him as a result of his victories.

The principle behind this example and requirement of the past is; that the building of the House of God is a building of peace. So is promoted the question, Are we building peace, brethren and sisters? Truly we are to deal with that which would ruin peace. But are we exercising care for peace? We are all in the flesh, so we cannot say we do not need to exercise care. This is quite distinct from the requirement not to submit to evil for the sake of peace, which would not be a work of peace, though as concerning personal affronts we are not to take vengeance but show patience to the best of our endeavours, even as Christ's example so marvellously shows. The other side of the balance is that we could become noted for always being on the offensive, how dreadful! Because of course such a trait, whatever its label, would not be a building up for peace. “Fury is not in me” is what God has said. Again He has declared through the Psalmist if He “shouldest mark iniquities . . . who shall stand?” Forbearance and patience, therefore is a work which is contributing towards a building in peace. If we have to look at an example of forbearance and patience, and long suffering, there is no greater example than God Himself.

But we also balance such a divine requisite with the obvious spiritual direction that dealing with evil, which would destroy peace in the Ecclesia, is another slant on the work for peace. That is when it is of such moment, that it constitutes a threat to the Ecclesia.

The charge David gave to his son Solomon who was to build in peace is very searching and illuminating:

“And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will

be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

“Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong and do it.”

(1 Chron. 28:9-10)

Know thou the God of thy father; do we know Him brethren and sisters? “Fury is not in me”, yes this is something else we know of Him. The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts. He knows where there is a true seeking and He also knows where there is a seeking for the flesh, using a purported seeking for the purity and exactness of the truth merely as a gloss for a very evil spirit which is not working for a building for peace.

In context with this consideration may a very impressive object lesson be looked at:

“And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building.” (1 Kings 6:7)

God’s house was built in peace. Yes, truly the “glorious house” of which we aspire to belong . . . which has been in the process of being erected or prepared throughout the ages and generations has been *built* in this way, in peace and through peace. This is the basis for its construction. So as we work for peace in one way or another, in guarding our own tongue, or in bringing to silence that which would disrupt the building in peace, may we take courage that this is a positive and profitable work if it can bring us to the day when the House completed, the House of Peace, is filled with His glory.

D. L.



“Judge Righteous Judgement”

THE SECOND CHAPTER of the epistle of James seems to carry a pronounced theme on faith being shown by works. A theme we can pursue in most of the chapter, though only part of it specifically deals with “. . . faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” (verse 17)

The opening verses of chapter 2 may be considered as an application of this theme that faith needs to be shown by works — good works, of righteousness. What then can we see is the particular purpose of the admonishment:-

“My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, (together) with respect of persons”?

In the first place, to have respect of persons, is a wresting of judgment. In the particular instance mentioned of one who in his dress shows evidence of wealth, if he is honoured at the expense of a poor man, then we are told it is a violation of justice in verse 4, and evil is at work.

“Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?”

In one form or another, this is not an uncommon human failing, but it has varied forms. In the case before us of the rich man being honoured, from where do the evil thoughts originate? Take away the expensive clothing from the rich man and the shabby garments from the poor, and dress them both uniformly and, in this instance, the preferential treatment disappears. In this example, then it is easy to deduce what was being served: money, an idol, no different basically from gods of silver and gold. This is a sobering thought, when in these days it may be felt primitive and absurd to make a golden calf and worship it, but only to find the very same basic idolatry can easily exist in man today. Here is a lesson for those who would render true worship to the God of Israel, for their own good; that it is godliness, not gold, that needs to be valued if we are to avoid the retribution of many sorrows, self-inflicted, by allowing idols to have a place in the mind. Idols which cannot save us from trouble, but can do us great harm. We are reminded in verse 6 of an example of harm or evil that can arise from misplaced values:

“. . . Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before judgment seats?

“Do they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?” (Verses 6-7)

This is what the “rich” man tends to be like, because he serves the idol of riches, not the God of love; and if we were to honour the rich

man because of his wealth, we would partake of his idolatry, and suffer in direct consequence. This was a lesson for the kingdom of Judah in the days of Rehoboam when they forsook the Lord, who alone could do them good, in preference for the world's gods of the flesh. A "rich" man, Shishak, king of Egypt cast covetous eyes on the wealth of Judah and would have oppressed them to their destruction, but because there was some acknowledgement of their transgression, God stayed Shishak from destroying His people, but allowed some of the oppression, saying:

"Nevertheless they (Judah), shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries." (the ungodly)

What a difference would be experienced between the service of the Almighty, who is only good, plenteous in mercy, and able to save from trouble, as opposed to the service of the world and its idols, who are no good, but oppressive, loveless, and cruel! Truly our God is One to be exceedingly feared and valued.

Having respect of persons is a great evil for what it springs from, and is roundly condemned in its variety in the epistle of Jude, being associated with such evil workers as Balaam and Korah, Dathan and Abiram.

"These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage."

(verse 16)

The last few words are those on which we particularly want to focus our attention in this consideration, being in keeping with the fleshly advantage of honouring the rich man because of his riches, as we saw in James chapter 2.

However, there are other fleshly "advantages" so called, besides wealth, which can be as bad a snare, or worse, than riches. These idolatries can stem from any of the three basic evils in all human nature: "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." Any deviation from the pure and true service of God to have men's persons in admiration rather than God, is a wresting of His judgment, and must carry its dire penalties.

What other fleshly "advantages" are there, to use the phrasing in Jude, beside the instance already quoted, where the lust of the eyes in its love of money will show preferential treatment to one who has money? The lust of the flesh and the pride of life are equally seductive, and can each make their contribution to partial judgment which does not spring from good thinking, but evil.

It is well known in the world how one who is physically attractive can get away with outrageous conduct, especially if a star of stage,

screen or sport. People will excuse or ignore shocking behaviour in one who appeals to them. Similarly, could not evil be introduced into the people of God through the same weakness? It may be held in principle that the “world lieth in wickedness”, and all evil must be condemned; but is this condemnation always adhered to when it comes to an attractive woman, or a handsome young man? It has not always been in the past, as for instance when Israel doted on her lovers the Assyrians, desirable young men, gorgeously apparelled, all of them riding upon horses. Though other aliens might have been despised, the rule did not apply to these, to whom partiality was shown; a violation of true judgment due to the lust of the flesh. The result of this folly in Israel was that they were ruined by the ones whom they wrongly approved. So also would it be in our day, or any other day, if judgment is coloured by the flesh; giving partiality in favour of one who should not be favoured, or oppression towards another who is endeavouring to serve God.

Finally we come to that form of partiality that is engendered by the common enemy, pride. It often takes a more subtle form than vaunting one’s self, but shows a partial judgment towards one’s own flesh or family. This, of course is frequently seen in the world where children of influential parents are found the best positions, almost regardless of merit. The same weakness can encroach into the House of God if allowed, by excusing one’s own near ones or favourites, of wrongs that should not be excused — and would not if the same thing were done by others; or by seeking the best positions for one’s own, because elevating one that is close has the effect of elevating one’s self.

These things ought not so to be, even on a very small scale. While it is true that we all fail at times in one way or another, failures should never be taken lightly or excused. Improper judgment is a foundation stone of corruption, and impurity of heart, because it shows the encroachment of love for the creature, who can be served more than the creator. This is the path of decline, and cannot be trodden without risk of bitter consequences, along with the violation of any of God’s pure and wholesome laws.

Who would not like to be more worthy, and to enjoy the blessings which God alone can give in His good time? Let us see if we can, with Ezra, as we see from the first portion of the current readings, prepare our hearts to seek the Law of the Lord, and do it: and enjoy such blessing and help as he rejoiced in:

“Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, which hath put such a thing as this in the king’s heart, to beautify the house of the Lord . . . and hath extended mercy unto me before the king, and his counsellors And I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me. . . .” (Ezra 7:27-28)

A. E. I.

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

“. . . the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.” (Daniel 11:43)

AT THE TIME OF WRITING much conflict is proceeding in the region of Ethiopia and Somalia. In the international context it is not a great war. But in the political context there is indeed, a great involvement. Russia is working through Cuba to help Ethiopia. America, not so directly involved, is nevertheless very concerned, and no doubt, as a result of the Russian interference is orientated politically, if in no other way, towards Somalia.

Somalia, formerly Somaliland, derives its name from its principal inhabitants, the Somalis. In the past Great Britain, France, Italy and Ethiopia have exercised political control over various sections of that territory; which in its general outline on the map forms an irregular triangle with its apex at Cape Guardafui, thereby gaining the name of the “horn” of Africa. The north side of Somalia extends along the gulf of Aden, the east side skirts the Indian ocean.

These Somali people extend inland to the hills of Shoa and Harar (Ogaden) and the Galla country south of Shoa and east of Lake Rudolf. The portion of Ethiopia inhabited by Somalis is roughly between seventy-five and a hundred thousand square miles.

It is these Somali people in Ethiopia, particularly, who are at conflict with the Ethiopian Government forces, in a war of independence, helped by their kinsmen who live in the geographically defined Somali territory of Somalia. The Somali people at one time emigrated from Southern Arabia, and they are said to be the most recently arrived inhabitants of this portion of Africa. One group of the Somalis claim they are descended from Sharif Ishak Ahmad, who crossed from the Hadramaut with forty followers in the 13th century. They do not generally show any Negroid features, though undoubtedly there has been intermarriage with Negroes and Ethiopians. But in itself, this factor no doubt engenders sympathy from Saudi Arabia and associate states.

The Ogaden territory, which is the present scene of the troubles, has had a checkered diplomatic history. During the 19th century Britain concluded treaties with various Somali chiefs guaranteeing British protection. This was to ensure places of call on the Somali coast for her shipping (via the Suez Canal) journeying to the east. In 1888 there was an Anglo French treaty which defined their respective spheres of influence in the area, both powers undertook not to annex the Ogaden country, or place it under protection. But

in another treaty of 1894 Great Britain and Italy in defining their boundaries in the Somali territories agreed that while Great Britain would abandon any claims it might have to the Ogaden country in favour of Italy, Great Britain was to regard it as a part of her sphere of influence until Italy was prepared to take over. The British Somaliland protectorate was first a dependency of Aden and then transferred to the foreign office in 1898.

When World War Two came the Fascist Italian forces defeated the British and took over the British portion of Somalia. But not for long; just over six months later Indian and Somali-Arab forces returned to the attack, and the Italian army was quickly overcome. Thus ended Italian participation and influence in that region of the world. Administration of the territory was assumed by the British Occupied Territories Administration, the headquarters of which was at Nairobi, Kenya. The Ogaden was separated from Ethiopia and placed under British military control by the Anglo-Ethiopian Agreement of January 31st 1942, an extension of which agreement was ratified on December 19th 1944.

On the 1st July 1960 the Somali Republic came into being, covering former Italian and British Somaliland. But Somalia also claimed the Ogaden region, which is the home of so many of its race; and which, as seen from previous political events, in the agreements and manipulations of the one time occupying powers, such factors lend support to their view.

This then is a brief outline of the history of the case leading up to the present conflict; and but for Russian intervention, no doubt the Western Somalia Liberation Front would by now have completely pushed away Ethiopian control over this Desert Plain south of the Ahmar Mountains, which form a natural barrier between the Ogaden and the Ethiopian heartland.

But Russia has poured tanks and fighter bombers into the battle on behalf of Ethiopia. These are pushing north east from Dire Dawa skirting around the Ahmar range.

The Western Somalia Liberation Front however is countering the offensive by halting Ethiopian moves through the highlands from the city of Harar. Dire Dawa itself has been attacked by Somali forces making raids from the mountains and foothills surrounding that commercial terminus, which features so importantly in the Ethiopian war plans, being the place through which Russian armour passes before being thrown into the conflict in the desert.

At the time of writing it seems that a decisive battle is being fought on the northern front from Dire Dawa. The shorter route from Harar down the mountains to Jijiga at the entrance to the plain is not so suitable for such army vehicles by reason of the difficult terrain. The Somalis are still holding their original positions on the mountain road about 25 miles from Harar, and as close as 15 miles to the city in the mountains themselves. The Ethiopians on the other hand have advanced a considerable distance along a route that leads to Jijiga, which has become a very important factor in the conflict, being the doorway to the Ogaden plain, as already mentioned.

So attack and counter attack continues as the Ethiopians, helped not only by Russian arms and advisers, but also by Cuban troops, attempts to recapture the Ogaden.

Such events naturally have drawn America and its Western allies into the matter. The President has declared that it would be "a very serious breach of peace, endangering even worldwide peace", if Ethiopia aided by Russia was to cross into Somalia during the present Counter offensive in the Ogaden. The American Secretary of State has complained to the Russian Ambassador about the Cuban reinforcements reaching Ethiopia in Russian ships, together with more weapons for the Ethiopian forces. There are already about 10,000 Cuban troops and 1,000 Russian military advisers in Ethiopia; and a Russian General is directing a mainly Ethiopian force engaged in the conflict in the Harar region. About 400 Russian tanks and 50 MIG fighters were also involved. The Cubans comprised two infantry, and one mechanised brigade.

Somalia, of course, as a result is under great pressure. But its government is well supported by its people. In the governmental centre itself, 30,000 civilians have volunteered for the Somali army. The Somali President in calling for his people's help, has said that they will fight to the last man for the Ogaden, and were prepared to stand alone against the Russian tanks if necessary.

To the Somalis "the nation" means not just their own state, but all the lost lands of their tribe, including the Ogaden province of Ethiopia. America has not supported this claim, and so Somalia now

appears to be hoping for supplies of anti-tank guns and anti-aircraft missiles from the Arab states and Persia. But Somalia is not openly at conflict with Ethiopia, rather is helping the Ogaden guerrillas of the Western Somali Liberation Front, who are former Ogaden dwellers, in whatever way it can, including sending some of its regular troops over the border to help their fellows. This probably would not have been necessary, for the W.S.L.F. had been quite successful until Russian and Cuban interference. This penetration by these Communist countries is what is chiefly concerning America at the present time.

America has made its general position very clear. In a statement for world publication it has served notice that it intends to guard the oil fields of the Middle East for itself, and for its allies in Europe and Asia. Because of the importance of oil, peace and security in the Middle East was essential to the West. The declaration is summed up in the following quotation. "We intend to safeguard the production of oil and its transportation to consumer nations without interference by hostile Powers." This is quite a significant reminder to all concerned, that the United States is watching the situation in the Horn of Africa.

So in current affairs The King of the North and the King of the South situation is quite apparent, as also the Sheba and Dedan orientation. As well the Ethiopian one, which nation for all its "christian" claim, and supposed leaders connection in former times as being of the "lion of the tribe of Judah"; is now seen to be in league with the Northern Power, at whose steps it will be, as the spirit foretold 2,500 years ago.

D. L.



Service

IT IS UNQUESTIONABLY TRUE that the man who shows us where we can improve, serves us better than the one who gives indiscriminate praise. So even a rebuke may be a gesture of love evoking the gratitude of a truly wise man.

What a difference it would make to life if all people were moved by the ideal of service as it is expressed in the book of Proverbs: to build the house and not pull it down, to be diligent and not slothful, and to be ready to take the humble place rather than to seek the best seat (Prov.25:6-7). Beyond this is the very Christian idea of readiness to give even when the natural instinct would be to withhold. "If thine enemy hunger, give him bread to eat; if he be thirsty, give him water to drink" (Prov.27:21).

There are a few such servants of God in the earth even now, seeking to serve and not to shine; ready for any good work however unpleasant and never anxious to take the post of prominence. They are the type of men to whom the king will say "Come up hither".



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.

Interest continues in several directions, for which we are grateful. Advertising in February was directed to the suburban areas east of Buffalo, and the March effort is planned, God willing for Hamburg, Orchard Park, and East Aurora.

We are grateful for the improvement in those who are ill and rejoice at this response to the supplications of many.

The Sunday School Party, scheduled for February 18, has been postponed until March 11.

J. A. DeF.

“PENTRIP”, Black Rock, Portmadoc,

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

As spring fills the air and the days lengthen we receive this as a blessing of God, and with a feeling of hope because a day will surely come when the darkness and the storms of this present turmoiled world will recede before the Sun of Righteousness.

We continue in our endeavour to witness to the Truth in these parts as opportunity is provided.

per D. L.

MANCHESTER: Ryecroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, Manchester,

Sundays: Breaking of Bread: 11.30 a.m.
Bible Class: 7.30 p.m. in the ante room to large hall,
Wednesday evening.

It is a day of “small things”. Yet the work does go on, and therefore the witness; and though it be a small work, yet according to His will He is able to accomplish through it that which is necessary for His great and ultimate purpose.

It is a comfort to know that He does over rule all things, and that efforts of witness beyond the scale of our ability are not required; for in His own wonderful and mysterious way He is able to draw to Himself, and therefore to those who are His, from any quarter of the globe, any who may be truly seeking Him.

D. L.