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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

“Who is like God?”

SOMETIMES WE MAY QUESTION why God has preserved the record of the kings of Israel and Judah — particularly of Israel, for they were only evil — astray from their God. We are currently reading of Ahab, of whom it is written:

“... Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.”

(I Kings 16:33)

He was a weak king, dominated by his wife, Jezebel, circumstances of which we read:

“And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.”

(I Kings 16:31)

Jezebel — even today the name denotes shame, wickedness, idolatry. It was to such depths Israel's king had sunk; and, under his leadership, the ten tribes served Baal. Yet during this time of departure from the ways of God, there were men in Israel who stood up against the evil, and sought to glorify their God. We know of Elijah, one of God's prophets, who withstood Ahab and Jezebel. We are also aware of Elisha, who became heir to the mantle of Elijah, following in his walking with God. These men of God led difficult lives — often in jeopardy of death; but, we know, were cared for. They were fed in a time of famine and preserved in a time of danger by the God of Israel, whom they served so faithfully.

### OBADIAH

There were others as well, whom we may not recall so clearly as Elijah and Elisha; yet, who risked their lives in the service of their God, and because of this faithfulness, were cared for and blessed. In I Kings 18, we read of Obadiah, whose name means — *servicing Yahweh*.

“... Obadiah feared the Lord greatly. (verse 3)

These are very telling words, for he was governor in Ahab's house, and no doubt was aware of the evil there, as well as Jezebel's influence for idolatry. It would be difficult in these circumstances to truly fear the Lord; yet, Obadiah did, as evidenced by verse 4:

“For it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.”

This he did, no doubt, at great risk to himself, for if found out, he would be killed by Jezebel, even though he was governor of Ahab's house. How grateful those hundred prophets would feel for Obadiah's care! How pleased God would be with Obadiah, as he lived up to his name, servant of Yahweh. The bread and water provided by Obadiah was the only means of sustenance for His prophets. We remember that at this time, there was a three-year drought in the land. Even bread and water would be extremely scarce, making it difficult as well as dangerous for Obadiah to provide — especially without attracting attention to himself. Perhaps he went without bread and water himself, in order to feed his brethren in the caves. Bread and water — simple fare, not fancy, not likely to be appealing — but sustaining their lives. It must have been hard for those one hundred as they dwelt in the caves; yet, they *were* protected, fed by God's working through His servant Obadiah.

We may well ask — why has God preserved this record — what does it mean to us, brethren and sisters? It is an example of faithfulness, in the midst of evil surroundings; of trust in God, and of His care for those who are striving to serve Him in the midst of great danger. How can we follow the example of Obadiah, striving to be true servants of God? This record shows how we must put our trust in God, serve Him without fear of the consequences — no matter what our position in life may be. He will care for us, if we are truly working to do His will; if we do indeed care for one another as we're given opportunity and means. Also like the prophets in those caves, we must be grateful for the protection and love shown. We must be content to live by and be grateful for whatever is provided, even if only bread and water — our barest needs. We remember Israel in the wilderness. They were granted water from the rock — bread from heaven; they were covered by the cloud and the fire. Were they content, grateful, trusting in God to lead them? We know the answer. They murmured, they yearned to go back to bondage, for they remembered the good things of Egypt, the superficial things which appealed to their fleshly appetites. They failed to remember the affliction, the rigor with which they were forced to serve Pharaoh. We are not told more about those hundred prophets, but doubtless they were grateful to God and to Obadiah; and probably would have been numbered among those “. . . seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.” (I Kings 19:18) What a strength the knowledge of those seven thousand must have been to Elijah when he was feeling — “. . . I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.” (I Kings 19:10)

Do we not need to realize, brethren and sisters, that we are *never* alone; God, and those who are God's, are always there to help, to

encourage, to sustain in a time of despair. How easily we can overlook this; yet, we are reminded so often, as was Obadiah when he feared to go and tell Ahab that Elijah was to be found, lest by that time Elijah may have disappeared, and *he* would be slain. How easily fear can prevent us from doing what God requires. Yet, even in the midst of fear, help is given, as Elijah encouraged Obadiah:

“ . . . As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him today. So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him. . . . ” (I Kings 18:15, 16)

It must have been with fear and trembling that Obadiah went to tell Ahab, yet he was cared for. It does take courage and faith to face the “Ahab” of this life. We are helped to do so as we read of Elijah, Elisha, Obadiah, the hundred prophets, and the seven thousand who did not bow the knee.

### Micaiah

We have read of another prophet, to whom we may not always give sufficient attention: Micaiah by name. This name means in the Hebrew — “who is like God?” He was hated of Ahab, who said of him:

“ . . . There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the Lord: *but I hate him*; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. . . . ” (I Kings 22:8)

Evidently Ahab had known the prophecy of Micaiah previously, and did not like it, because he spoke the truth, that only evil would befall him. How true it is that hatred (or as the word means — enemy, foe) comes upon those striving to be godly because of their speaking God’s word — the enmity is always there. Ahab was the powerful king of Israel; Micaiah was a humble prophet of God, and he did not fear to speak what God required of him, even though it brought the hatred of the king upon him. What was the result of his forthright declaration? Ahab said,

“ . . . Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, until I come in peace.”  
(I Kings 22:27)

How Micaiah must have suffered, being in prison and fed only with water and bread. He may have felt, Why should I be suffering so when I am doing the will of God — why am I so afflicted? He may have felt to be forsaken by his God. If so, he was not alone in that feeling; for we, too, sometimes feel forsaken when affliction and trials press hard upon us. This was David’s experience also, as we listen to his cry:

“My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. . . My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?” (Psalm 42:2-3)

He further wrote:

“I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy . . . while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?”

(verses 9-10)

These were the words of Jesus as He gave His life:

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

(Matthew 27:46)

As His flesh cried out, His enemies asked, “Where is thy God?” They taunted Him:

“. . . If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.”

(Matthew 27:40)

And also:

“He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.” (verse 43)

Micaiah no doubt felt like this; David felt like this; Jesus felt like this. Is it any surprise that we should also feel the same in times of affliction? Water of affliction, bread of affliction, prison. These things are not easy. They are really to try our faith. Do we believe God is there to help? Indeed, He knows we need this affliction, oppression to make us realize our dependence upon Him, to put our trust in Him who has placed us in sore trial. He *will* deliver, as no doubt Micaiah firmly believed. For this, he *was* delivered, when his prophecy of the death of Ahab came true — in spite of all the conniving the king did to prevent it being fulfilled.

God’s words of encouragement to Israel are a help to us.

“Though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.” (Isaiah 30:20-21)

Brethren and sisters, we *do* have teachers — given of God. From God flows the instruction of His word, giving us examples of men like Elijah and Elisha, with whom we are so familiar. The examples, too, of others given in this record of the kings of Israel: Obadiah, Micaiah, and so many others — seven thousand in Elijah's time.

Can we, brethren and sisters, profit by their living witness — perhaps remember Micaiah by his Hebrew name, "Who is like God?" Let us strive more earnestly, that in time, in His mercy, we may be accounted acceptable, and in a measure to become "like God" indeed.

J. A. De F.



## Christadelphians then and now

**I**T IS A UNIVERSAL TRUTH although not generally recognised that the foundation principles of various sects are soon forgotten and relegated to a position of no importance by subsequent generations. Baptists no longer believe in the necessity of baptism for salvation. Quakers have long ceased to “quake” or “tremble” at the Word of God. This pattern, it is sad to observe also is a characteristic of those who once had *the* Truth in these latter days.

At the beginning of this century many who came to *the* Truth found it alienated them from their friends, and in some instances caused their expulsion from their homes. If memory can be relied upon the doctrine of the Trinity was the cause of much discension and division. To profess unbelief in the Trinity was to place oneself outside the sphere of respectability, and resulted in a painful ostracism.

The lectures at the time were on the various issues which distinguished *the* Truth: “God is One not three”; “Man mortal, Immortality conditional.”; “Baptism the only means of acceptance by God” — etc., etc. these and similar subjects exposed current theology as nothing more than a sentimental theory. A classic example of this was in connection with baptism. “Do you mean to say that a babe not baptised has no hope?” The affirmation of the Truth seemed to most, callous and cruel. Yet, as Dr. Thomas powerfully and courageously pointed out, the babe, if it had a hope, must live and grow; so that when met by its parents at some future time, they would fail to recognise their offspring!

Robert Roberts had to withstand, as a young father, bitter attacks for his defence of this position. Both he and his wife found it a severe blow when two infants were lost in a week. Temptation to believe in a future life for them was great, but faith aided by courage survived, and this enabled them to give an answer to the gibe, “wait until you have lost an infant; then you will change your tune.” But it was a hard trial to take an infant in his coffin to the cemetery when memory treasured the smiles and affection which was seen and valued as it was cradled in its parents arms. The cold stillness of death in an erstwhile lively infant spoke of a finality which was crushing, and almost overwhelming.

The doctrine of the Truth in this dispensation shows clearly that there can be no hope of a future life apart from baptism, understood, believed and obeyed. This has been too much for many *Christadelphians*, who as a Sunday School scholar killed in a motor cycle accident, was said to have hope although not baptised — under the plea that God is very merciful. Of course He is, but never allows this

to controvert the principles of His Truth; otherwise the truth would soon be swamped by the sentimentalists of Christendom. It is in His power to keep alive anyone who is to be "called". We remember years ago how carefully and delicately this doctrine had to be handled in the case of one approaching the Truth where a near one had just died. This was the cause of not a few turning back and seeking a false solace in one of the sects promising life which the Truth could not do. Courage was required, but had to be considerably applied. It should be remembered that it is God who "*calls*". He will not call one who has not faith to respond to His conditions; otherwise this would place the Deity in the sad position of calling to destruction and not calling to salvation. His "*call*" is always to salvation; the outcome depending whether there is obedience to His "*call*". The great mercy of the God of heaven in this is seen throughout the scriptures, and is expressed in the following inspired words:

"For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." (2 Chron. 16:9)

This is why in any work God's lead should be sought; as for example a promising enquiry from someone apparently seeking the Truth. To treat the work as a business, plan the work on commercial lines is inimical to the Spirit of the Lord. Such a plan may gain numbers; but fail to make any converts to the Truth.

Some of the specious efforts to "attract" people to the Truth have been to hold concerts in which the performers have been notable for their *art* rather than their *heart*.

The rendering of the Messiah is a notorious example. Maybe large meetings have resulted giving the impression that the effort has been a success, but an objective look at the matter will soon reveal that it is possible to attract numbers to musical recitals, but few indeed will respond to the invitation to hear the simple truth.

The difficulty which has to be faced is that the truth never pleases or flatters the flesh. Just the reverse. Consequently, men turn their backs on the message, the only message, which tells them what they are by nature, and how in the mercy of the Creator they may be delivered from its perishing condition.

### **The Test of True Belief.**

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6)  
Once the mind and heart are applied to this quest, it will soon be found that by the opposition of those who are not of a godly and

submissive character, and the help of those who are right that the course to life becomes clearly marked out: a following of those who have the light and a shunning of those whose light is only darkness.

The test is indicated by John in his epistle:

“I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, *and that no lie is of the truth.*”

(1 John 2:21)

Christendom claims to have the truth; but how can this be substantiated when many lies abound in its teaching.

The Word throughout makes plain that the “wages of sin is death”; that in death there is a complete cessation of being, and the only hope is a resurrection from the prison-house of the tomb, followed by the judgment. And even such a resurrection is not for all. In the divine view there are three classes of mortals: the just, the unjust, and by far the greatest number — those who have not been “called”, but are permitted this life and then pass away as though they had not been.

The clearly marked dividing line between *the* truth and the many counterfeits is a blessing when it is appreciated that only by the preservation of this “dividing line” will *the* truth be preserved.

Many are the sects which constitute Christendom, but without exception each is part of a great apostasy, which will not be removed, yea destroyed until the Lord Jesus returns. Before He can or will establish His Kingdom the present chaos called Christendom will have to be removed. The Revelation shows this to be a major operation. Collectively the sects of Christendom constitute the latter-day Babylon, “Babylon the great”. The terms used by Jesus to describe this huge system will seem repulsive to those who have not the light of the Truth. Those who are wise will accept the words of Jesus as meriting their full meaning. Little reflection is needed to perceive that Christendom with its many sects is a sham, and is led, as Jesus says, by those who deceive the whole world.

*The* truth some hundred and twenty years ago was delivered from this dreadful state. Those espousing it realised that it was far better “to suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.”

To be a *Christadelphian* at the beginning of this century inevitably brought reproach. Modern *Christadelphians* having got rid of the “reproach” do not realise they have also got rid of Christ.

W. V. B.

## Lessons from Jeremiah

God “turneth his hand against me”.

God “hath led me, and brought me into darkness”.

God “hath broken my bones”.

God “shutteth out my prayer”.

God “hath made my paths crooked”.

God “hath made me desolate”.

**W**ORDS OF A HERETIC, no doubt would be our first reaction after hearing these words spoken above, yet we find such is not the case, but rather they are the words of Jeremiah, a prophet of God, whose name means, “whom God hath appointed”.

Why would Jeremiah voice these words as we read in the Lamentations? Jeremiah answers our question, for in the 3rd chapter of Lamentations verses 18 to 21 we read:

“And I said, My strength and my hope are perished from the Lord, Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to my mind; therefore have I hope.”

The apparent contradiction of Jeremiah’s words is really not a contradiction at all, but rather the portrayal of the conflict that exists between the thoughts of the flesh and the mind of the spirit. On the one hand, Jeremiah speaks the words recited above and summarizes, “My hope is perished from the Lord”. On the other hand, he is calling to mind his affliction which humbled him to say, “Therefore have I hope”. Are we mindful of the significance of calling to remembrance the similar thoughts and feelings we have; mindful of the hopelessness of the flesh; prompted to humility; and, so regard the true hope we have?

Have we not all at one time or another despaired at the restraint required to live the Truth, and without doubt, we will be caused to grieve in the future. Such a struggle as Jeremiah reveals is not new, it is an age-old conflict renewed each day of our living. To contemplate our situation must cause us to view the sure mercies of God as Jeremiah’s words speak in the 22nd and 23rd verses,

“It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness”.

Where would we be without the love of God? Truly God *is* long-suffering with those who are His people, as Malachi speaks to us saying,

“For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.” Malachi 3:6

Peter tells us also,

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

(II Peter 3:9)

In order to come to repentance, there is required a being brought low, the humility which Jeremiah spoke of; and, such a realization is made possible because God knows the heart, knows what is there, and knows what is lacking. As Jeremiah further reveals to us:

“For the Lord will not cast off for ever: But though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.” (Lamentations 3:31-33)

What a comfort there is in these words, the realization that as God sees a need, He is there to cause us to recognize that need, — a need which, when attended to, helps us to value the true hope we have.

Our response to God’s working with us is what counts. Do we submit to the Spirit’s lead, or do we fight against it by allowing the natural inclinations of our flesh to take over? At times we will fail, but it is at these times also that the advice of Jeremiah can help us, to keep in mind prior afflictions, and how the overcoming was made possible through the love of God. It is by this means we can maintain our hope as we wait for the return of the Lord Jesus.

This speaks to us of the contentment that the children of God should display. The recognition that Jeremiah alludes to in verse 25 and 26:

“The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.”

Such godliness with contentment is “great gain”, as Paul exhorts us, for it indeed does keep alive the hope of salvation, the recognition of our place in God’s sight, and our need always to move in the way which God has appointed for us.

M.C.S.

## “Let us Labour”

**I**N THE EARLY CHAPTERS of the epistle to the Hebrews, which we are reading, we have a comparison between those called to the Truth, being baptised into Moses, and those called to the Truth in our age, being baptised into Christ. A very definite link is given chapter 4:2 for the purpose of warning by example of previous failure:

“For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.”

It may be profitable for us to examine that warning with a view to seeing just what is required of us if we are to enter into God’s rest, which will be glorious.

It seems as though the alternatives before us are contained in verse 11 in the form of headings, after which we might pursue them in greater detail.

“Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”

Can we say that “labour”, and whatever is involved therein, is the avenue for us to pursue; while “unbelief”, and whatever it constitutes, is the characteristic to fear, for God has sworn in His wrath that such shall not enter into His rest?

What then is the labour in which we need to be engaged now, and from which labours we may cease if we enter into God’s rest? Surely more is involved than practical labours or even than fulfilling appointments. The labour in which we need to be engaged must involve a certain kind of effort on our part and this effort may be highlighted by the warning given to us from the example of many who failed in Israel by not making that effort, and that failure is counted as unbelief. We see this from chapter 3:

“Wherefore (as the Holy Spirit saith, Today if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness. When your fathers tempted me, proved me and saw my works forty years.

Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.

And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.”

(verses 7-11, 18-19)

God is no respecter of persons as is shown by the fact that even Moses shared this condemnation in part, when he failed at Meribah: not only being prohibited from entering the land, but his transgression was counted as unbelief, as we see in Numbers 20:12:

“And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye *believed me not*, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.”

It seems therefore, that unbelief has a very broad significance in covering almost any departure from God, including those who err from the heart, to those who stumble, as did Moses.

Bearing in mind that we are trying to work towards the meaning of the labour or work incumbent upon us if we are to enter into His rest. We are trying to arrive at that conclusion by contrast with those who have not laboured in the way God has called us to labour. Perhaps this is epitomised in the record of Exodus 32:6:

“And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.”

In this glaring example of unbelief, in which the particular transgression was idolatry, we are specifically told the people were at play instead of at work, or labouring. This situation is easy to analyse in that the offenders were taking a rest from righteousness — their own short-sighted rest, through hardening their hearts. In their play, God was put on one side, with no attempt to work or labour for righteousness; the fulfilling of His will. Does not this point up where our labours should be directed, if we are to enter into God’s rest? Israel’s sitting down to eat and drink, and then rising up to play is something of an allegory; for it describes a more general situation into which any of us can most easily fall. We should not be under any illusions about this, feeling complacent that we would never do such a thing as Israel did when Moses was away.

Moses had ascended to receive the Law by the disposition of angels, and similarly our Head is away in Heaven for a long time, leaving us in a comparable situation, in which we can very easily leave off our labour toward God, and take our own rest by engaging in our own thoughts, ways, interests and so on.

To pave the way for our labours to continue in the right direction we may refer to 2 Timothy 2:4:

“No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”

Surely no effort can be made in any direction unless there is time and strength reserved for that cause. So as the parable of the sower also illustrates, in the seed which fell among thorns, the more involved in material things we allow ourselves to be, the less time and strength will we have for the spiritual. This is the background, and very important it is too, as part of our labour toward God. However even this is not all, for when an house is empty, swept and garnished, it still needs to be re-furnished with good sound things. Is it not so with ourselves? In this time when we are called upon to labour, with a view to being counted worthy of God’s rest, we need not only to deny making unnecessary provision for the flesh, but also to work and strive for the fulfilment of God’s will in all things. Do we not all know that this labour is one that really requires effort? When we are minded to do this or that which pleases us, to obtain something that appeals to us, or speak words that our own feelings impel us to say, it can be a labour and effort indeed to consider what God’s view may be, as well as our own, and be prepared to abandon our own idea, without reservation. We must have come across such decisions from time to time — perhaps frequently — and these are an exercise for us to see if we are willing to labour for God’s rest, or whether we choose to take our own rest from God’s way. But if we do choose the latter, we need to fear and tremble for that is hardening our hearts, and is akin to sitting down to eat and drink, and rising up to play. This is considered an evil heart of unbelief, and against which God has sworn that such shall not enter into His rest.

*If we do labour now to wait upon God’s will and to fulfill it, and we are permitted to enter His rest, what then will His rest give us? Surely, the saints will have plenty to do in their judging before and throughout the Kingdom; in their proclamation of the gospel, and so on. The rest that they will enjoy is the complete end of all striving or labouring for righteousness and against sin, in themselves; for the divine nature that they will possess will enable them to think as God in all ways, at all times. Can we not see in the full sense, that rest will be glorious, for the glory of God will be seen in those who exhibit His holiness and His righteousness?*

A. E. I.

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

**“And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the Lord, because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel. When they took hold of thee by thy hand, thou didst break and rend all their shoulder; and when they leaned upon thee, thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand.**

**Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will bring a sword upon thee, and cut off man and beast out of thee.”**

(Ezekiel 29:6-8)

**“Thus saith the Lord; They also that uphold Egypt shall fall . . . .”**

(Ezekiel 30:6)

**W**HEN THE EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT took an initiative for a settlement with Israel, Israel was undoubtedly relieved. Was not Egypt the most populous of the Middle Eastern nations that were on her borders? Would not such a lead cause other Arab nations to eventually come to terms?

But towards the end of November last year, evidence began to emerge that Saudi Arabia was taking a strong stand against the Egyptian — Israeli initial agreement, in which the American President had been involved.

Now such an outlook in Arabia could have a profound effect upon the United States Government's outlook. There are large numbers of American troops and civilians in the Arabian peninsula. The transfer to the Saudi territory of advanced jet fighters by the United States, moreover, is turning, to quote a senior American official, the Arabian peninsula into “a gigantic American aircraft carrier.”

The United States obviously does not think it can allow an upheaval of opinion against itself in a country which has the world's largest known oil reserves. Furthermore the tremendous wealth acquired by the Saudis which has been invested abroad if manipulated by an unfriendly government would cause grave financial upset in the West. American policy therefore will be cautious in the face of Saudi political opinion.

So the end of last November saw American moves behind the scenes to squeeze more concessions from Israel to effect an agreement with Egypt which would suit not only Egypt but Saudi-Arabia.

Israel's Prime Minister responded by declaring that there was nothing left within his power as a leader of Israel to win further compromise from his nation for Middle East peace. Speaking to the United States President by telephone he said that in accepting the American compromise proposal of 11th November 1978 the Israeli government had gone as far as it was possible to go in the interests of peace.

This American compromise involved the loose linking of a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt allowing progress for the Palestinians towards self-rule on the Jordan West Bank, and in the Gaza Strip.

Israel's view was that Egypt and its leader must find their own way of following Israel's acceptance of the American compromise without Egypt appearing in the eyes of Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries of having given ground.

The Egyptian version of the draft treaty which eventually was published in Cairo left out a very important item which provided in effect for the treaty with Israel having priority over previous commitments by Egypt to the Arab world. Israel had understood originally that Egypt had in fact accepted this article of the treaty. As a result there was wide welcome of it in Israel and the Israeli population was told it meant that in the event of an attack on Israel by an Arab country Egypt would not be party to the attack nor would it intervene.

17th December 1978 was the deadline for the signing of the peace agreement, and the President of the United States warned that failure to reach an understanding by this date would be a "very serious matter" having "far-reaching adverse effects". Asked at the time whether he thought the proposed construction of four new Jewish settlements on the West Bank of the Jordan would be in his view a violation of the initial agreement in which he was involved, he replied "Yes, I would", and went on to say "My interpretation of the Camp David agreements (which took place in America) and you know that Prime Minister Begin disagrees with this interpretation, is that there is a moratorium on the establishment of new settlements until agreements have been reached on how to establish the autonomous government on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip".

About this time the President of Egypt proclaimed that he had no objection to the date of 17th December 1978 but specified that the signing a month after ratification by both parliaments had to be on

Mount Sinai. The United States President would be invited to this ceremony which the Egyptian leader wanted to be a celebration for Christians, Moslems and Jews.

The hours ticked by, sunrise and sunset passed twice, and the United States Secretary of State who had flown hopefully to the Middle East, had to say three days before the deadline that agreement was "as far away as ever". Now the Egyptian President was insisting not only on a timetable for Palestinian self-rule but also that the exchange of ambassadors between Egypt and Israel would not take place until Palestinian autonomy had been started.

At the same time Israel was incensed by an American Senator's remark that Congress might be reluctant to find the extra necessary aid to Israel if Mr. Begin authorised new Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. An important Israeli spokesman condemned this comment and said the U.S. Senator had made it clear where the American President stood, and it was better that Israel had found this out before agreeing the terms of a treaty; the remarks had been in violation of the whole tradition of three decades in which the U.S. and Israel had co-operated.

17th December 1978 passed by and Israel's Prime Minister began to prepare an important speech to the nation in which his disillusionment would be revealed. Egypt had proved to have been "a staff of reed to the house of Israel." "When they leaned upon thee, thou brakest!"

The American President's part in the matter was unanimously being regarded as a "biased and distorted approach to the peace mediation", he had been acting far out of his role as "honest broker". There was comparison made with American government change of attitude towards Taiwan; a "selling out of a smaller country for diplomatic recognition with China."

Meanwhile Saudi-Arabia increased its oil production to over ten million barrels a day in the face of the Persian oil crisis; no doubt showing to the United States that it is not unpleased at the way events have gone. The United Arab Emirates have also assured that they would attempt along with other oil producing states to compensate for the loss of Persian supplies.

At the time of writing the latest comment from the Prime Minister of Israel was:

"The Egyptians surprised us just as December 17th was approaching...."

“Egypt came with new demands and with new interpretations of the text and it had the support of the United States. We were never consulted. . . .”

“For the autonomy we need time. Without fixing a time-table or a target date, we shall arrive at a day of peace and quiet and mutual understanding, a day on which we shall be able to hold the elections for the autonomous administrative bodies, and to establish their institutions.”

“Any new ideas will have to come from the other side. . . . Our intention is to find a procedure which would show whether substantive talks with Egypt can be resumed.”

The shift of attitude by Egypt is enumerated as follows:

1. The United States interpretation given to article six of the draft treaty that the treaty did not bind Egypt to abstain from war against Israel but allowed it to join in the fighting alongside any Arab nation on the basis of the Arab security pact.
2. The Egyptian demand supported by the United States to change article four of the draft treaty to allow the parties to request a revision of the strength and of the positions of the armies of Sinai after five years. This made the treaty a temporary peace. “Peace should be permanent,” Mr. Begin said, rejecting the demand.
3. The exchange of Ambassadors between Israel and Egypt was foreseen immediately after the first Israeli withdrawal in Sinai within nine months and was agreed upon by President Sadat, in a letter to President Carter. “Now in another letter the United States supports the Egyptian demand that the exchange of Ambassadors should depend on the establishment of the autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza or at least in Gaza.
4. Egypt’s tendency to institute itself as the guardian of the Gaza Strip with an Egyptian police force and a liaison office.
5. “We never accepted and will not accept a timetable for elections or establishing autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza. No target date was included in the draft.”

So the support of Egypt was no support at all, it “broke and rent all their shoulder”, causing a rift between Israel and the United States.

But for the United States there is also the ancient warning still ringing forth:

“Thus saith the Lord, they also that uphold Egypt shall fall. . . .”

D.L.

**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, and Orchard Park. Alternate Week: Revelation Study.

While the departure of our Sisters Della and Hazel Glenn to become part of the Manchester Ecclesia has brought sadness to us, we do rejoice at His guidance in all that has been allowed, and believe it is for good in His House. How grateful we are for the hope of being united forever in His kingdom.

The witnessing continues as letters come in from many receiving the magazine.

The Sunday School Party is planned for Saturday, February 17, God willing.

J. A. De F.

**“PENTRIP”, Black Rock, Portmadoc.**

Breaking of Bread: Sundays, 11.30 a.m.

Bible Class: Mid-Week.

It has been considered wise to advertise in a local paper so that in this time of great difficulty for the world, any who have ears to hear may hear.

We have been grateful for the great overruling care for us, and for all, at the time of the great weather crisis. It was good to hear of the safe arrival of the Sisters from the United States and we now look forward to the spring and summer when we shall contact our brethren and sisters in this area, subject to His will.

per D.L.

**MANCHESTER: Ryecroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, Manchester.**

Sundays: *Breaking of Bread*: 11.30 p.m.

Bible Class: 7.30 p.m. in the ante room to large hall,  
Wednesday evening.

Sister Glenn and Sister Hazel Glenn have removed from the States, and intend to take up permanent residence here. We warmly welcome them, feeling their presence will be a help in the work. Their removal will be a loss to the Eden ecclesia, but though separated by many miles we are all *one*, as we hope the expected event of Christ's return will abundantly show.

Let us strive as "co-labourers" with Him to promote this unity which is so precious; and is an earnest of the promised unity in the Kingdom.

W.V.B.

