

MARCH 1991

A Monthly Magazine issued by

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 that ye be not deceived"

"AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD"

"LOVE YOUR ENEMIES"

"THE SABBATH DAY AND THE LORD'S DAY" (continued)

"A BIBLE CLASS"

"DR. THOMAS ON THE PRESENT GULF CRISIS"

"DR. THOMAS' POSITION IN RELATION TO THE TRUTH"

"SIGNS OF THE TIMES AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD"

"NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS"

All Communications

D. Lancaster
227 Moston Lane East
New Moston
Manchester M40 3HY
England

M. C. Steiger
836 King Road
Forestville
New York 14062
U.S.A.

**AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD
"I HAVE MADE THEE A WATCHMAN"**

This past week we have been awed and strengthened by the experiences of Ezekiel. He was a prophet sent to those in exile, conquered along with King Jehoiakim by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. In the fifth year of that captivity God chose Ezekiel, also in exile, to be His messenger, His watchman for those Israelites in Babylon and also, by message, to those remaining still in Jerusalem. We are not told much about Ezekiel's background except that he was a priest and therefore of the tribe of Levi. The Almighty, however, did know Ezekiel and chose him in perfect knowledge and wisdom for a difficult and vital work:

"The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, ...in the land of the Chaldeans..." Ezekiel 1:3.

Expressly—in a plain and definite manner, and for a particular purpose—making it clear that the Almighty had a great and special work for His prophet:

"...the hand of the LORD was there upon him." Vs. 3.

Can we imagine the prophet's reaction as God spoke, and as he perceived the divine hand with its miraculous power directing him? We think back to how the earth was created; all it required was: "And God said, ...and it was so." This is the same irresistible force which came expressly to Ezekiel. He might well have wondered: Why me?—just as David did when God gave him such wonderful promises: "Who am I?" The Almighty, recognizing the impact of this experience upon Ezekiel, revealed the wondrous vision of the four living creatures in all their fearful glory. What inspiration and determination they wrought in Ezekiel as he perceived the work God had in mind for Him. In Ezekiel 10:18, the four living creatures were called, cherubim, those who carry out God's purpose—beginning in the Garden of Eden as they guarded the way to the tree of life, to the revelation given to John where they are seen accomplishing the Almighty's

great design for the earth. Ezekiel was shown also the glory and awesome power of Yahweh:

“...This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord...”
Ezekiel 1:28.

We can imagine his fear and wonder, and in that feeling Ezekiel fell on his face in worship. The prophet, overwhelmed and in amazement, questioned what it meant for him. God quickly told him:

“...Son of man, stand upon they feet, and I will speak unto thee.”
Ezekiel 2:1.

Then was revealed the work which He had in mind for Ezekiel:

“...I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: ...”
Verse 3.

Rebellious—The word is related to marah—bitterness, disobedience, provocation. Because of their evil actions against their God, Israel became captives in Babylon, and for the same reason Jerusalem was soon to be in ruins. As the prophet listened and realized the work God required, he naturally would feel apprehensive and hesitant, but was helped, even as his name tells us—“strengthened of God”. His Father spoke:

“...be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions:...

And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear:...”

Ezekiel 2:6-7.

This was not a pleasant prospect—briers, thorns, scorpions; but help was available to our brother:

“...behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo a roll of a book was therein;

And he spread it before me; and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe.”
Ezekiel 2:9-10.

As we have read this morning, Ezekiel ate the roll, absorbed it, and then he was instructed:

“...go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them.” Ezekiel 3:4.

This was not an easy work, for most scorned to hear, though it might have saved them. It is a great testimony to God's mercy and forbearance that He did send His watchman to this defiant people, giving them every opportunity. The Almighty's words to Ezekiel were:

“Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.” Ezekiel 3:17.

So commissioned, the prophet did go to the house of Israel, did give them clear warning. As he anticipated and prepared his mind for this work, he would wonder what lay ahead, but he went in trust. The hand of the Almighty allowed him to quickly understand:

“... the hand of the LORD was there upon me; and he said unto me, Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee.” Ezekiel 3:22.

The prophet went as instructed and was again sustained in his work by the vision of the Lord's glory which stood before him (verse 23). Then the Almighty opened to him the reality of what dreadful and painful conditions lay ahead for him as a watchman:

“... Go, shut thyself within thy house... they shall put bands upon thee, ... and thou shalt not go out among them.” Ezekiel 3:24-25.

Ezekiel may well have felt—how can I truly “watch” if I must stay bound within my house? Yet there was more:

“... I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprovor...” verse 26.

Ezekiel was indeed dumb for a period of seven long years. He could have questioned again how he was to witness if he could not speak. Yet he trusted in his God who added:

“But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD God; He the heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear: for they are a rebellious house.” verse 27.

Can we imagine being without the ability to speak for seven years? He had no way to convey his needs, feelings, hope, despair. During this period he could speak only to impart the warning words of God. This man, our brother, had a wife, beloved. How very hard to be unable to speak of the every-day things with her. Indeed, before his tongue was loosed, God revealed a further great trial to him:

**“Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down.
So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded.”**

Ezekiel 24:16,18.

What overwhelming grief this prophet was given! Yet he was not to mourn, submitting and believing. What a heavy responsibility he bore in being a watchman to his people. This was part of “Thus saith the LORD”—part of being a prophet—part of being a sign to Israel.

By God’s direction he was to witness in a very special and unusual manner, a way which involved great personal tribulation and pain. The Almighty explained:

“... This shall be a sign to the house of Israel. Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity.

... three hundred and ninety days...

And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.”

Ezekiel 4:3-6.

Our brother was required to be bound and unable to turn from side to side for a total of four hundred and thirty days. For over a year and two months he was to lie on his side, bound. It is impossible for us to imagine the hardship and pain which he endured, witnessing powerfully by his actions, speaking only when "Thus saith the LORD".

Do we not wonder, Brethren and Sisters, how we should endure in like circumstances, unable to speak for seven years, bound, lying on one side for over a year, losing the beloved desire of one's eyes and commanded not to mourn or weep?

Yet Ezekiel's spirit is so clearly expressed when:

"... at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded." Ezekiel 24:18.

Being a watchman, one who looks intently and warns of danger, involves a speaking: "Thus saith the LORD", a putting aside of one's own needs, desires, hopes and comforts as the hand of the Lord is felt. It means a total giving of one's living to the Father. All this the natural man fears and rebels against, seeking his own. The Almighty in His wisdom fully knows this, as He told Ezekiel at the first:

"But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee." Ezekiel 2:8.

And Ezekiel obeyed, assimilating God's word; sustained by it, he went about his assigned work.

This morning, from the roll of His book, we have been shown the faith, submission and resolve of our brother, to yield his own ways to whatever the Almighty required. Does it not help us in our striving as watchmen, to bear affliction as we warn of danger, but also to proclaim the bridegroom near, as we often sing? Thus we are exhorted:

**"GO MEET HIM AS HE COMETH,
With joy, if yet with fear."**

J. A. DEF

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

In the writings of Luke, the Lord Jesus' mind and spirit are revealed in a manner to inspire us as we endeavour to take up our cross and follow Him. Placing ourselves in the Lord Jesus' position is impossible, especially as we remember that when He was crucified He looked down upon His persecutors and said:

**"Father, forgiven them; for they know not what they do."
Luke 23:34.**

How difficult such a plea would have been—to pray for those that had tormented and were in the process of killing Him. Such control of the flesh's natural inclinations reveals the completeness of His spirit. Think of the pain and suffering endured, yet He asked God's forgiveness for them.

Jesus revealed by His own actions during these final moments before death to the beauty and righteousness of the Word He had spent His life teaching. During His ministry he had taught the disciples concerned forgiveness saying:

**"... Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you."
Luke 6:27-28.**

Under the carnal influence of the flesh one would hate one's enemies yet here, enabled with the strength of the Spirit to deliver Himself, He submitted, setting a powerful example.

Even as we struggle to conform how easily we may resort to anger when provoked. Yet for those that seek to serve God, thoughts of hate or revenge must be put aside to follow the lesson left by Christ:

**"... love ye your enemies and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."
Luke 6:35-36.**

God today is still kind to the unthankful and evil. The world so full of wickedness is yet allowed by Him a measure of His benevolence in the ordered wonder of Creation. However, only a few are to receive the ultimate reward of His compassion as "children of the Highest":

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you;

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

Matthew 5:43-45.

These, His words are expanded in thought as recorded by Luke: that there is a judgment to come, but until that time His goodness is seen in the blessings of nature. However, those who desire to be His must work out their period of probation striving to nourish the fruits of the spirit in their living even as taught by Jesus who did so perfectly:

"For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Matthew 5:46-48.

In trying to walk after Jesus' example, our own trials and tribulations are minor in comparison, yet how easy it is to lack in displaying His spirit of forgiveness.

There are many examples in the Scriptures of those who put aside hate and revenge in time of testing. David restrained himself from harming Saul in the cave, instead beseeching him:

"... Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?"

Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the LORD's anointed."

1 Samuel 24:9-10.

David perceived this as a test from God and bowed himself to His will. The upper hand had been given to David against his old enemy Saul, but his mind was:

"The LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee."

verse 12.

He did not allow his flesh to circumvent God's purpose, believing that vengeance belonged to God alone, even though he had been hounded throughout the land by Saul.

Job was another who suffered unjustly at the hands of those who called themselves "friends", yet he contained his natural inclinations, bending his own will to God's because he too wished to be known as one of His:

"... for I should have denied the God that is above.
If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him:
Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soul."
Job 31:28-30.

At the end of Job's trial, God's retribution came upon his tormentors:

"... the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against they two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.

Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your

folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job.” Job 42:7-8.

How much these examples of Jesus, David and Job teach of the care needed in exercising the spirit of goodness over our flesh toward our “enemies”.

“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink, for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Romans 12:19-21.

Peter exhorts his brethren in the same manner:

“... be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts:

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but quickened by the Spirit.”

I Peter 3:8-9, 14-15, 18.

This blessing has been made possible through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus—the One who could pray for those who not only despitefully used Him but eventually were the instruments of His death. That quickening spoken of by Peter is the hope of eternal life, held out for those who can overcome the evilness of their own flesh nature through the goodness of the Spirit's teaching. Only those can hope to be known as “children of the Highest” when He returns.

M. C. S.

**The Sabbath Day and the Lord's Day (Dr. Thomas 1859)
(continued)**

Of the things, then, which have been written under this head, this is the sum.

1/The six creation-days were each as long as the seventh, whose duration is defined by the Mosaic law, and consequently the geological notion of their being six several periods of many centuries each, falls to the ground as a mere conceit of infidel philosophy.

2/ The Lord God ended his work on the seventh day, "and was refreshed" by the songs of the Morning Stars, and the joyous shouts of the Sons of God.

3/ To celebrate his rest he constituted it holy and a day of blessing. Hence it was commemorative of the past, and "a shadow of things to come."

4/ The seventh day was observed by Adam and Eve as a day of delight, before they became sinners. The immediate cause of their joyousness on the day of rest is not testified. It is certain it was not a burdensome day; for sin had not yet marred their enjoyments. It was probably because of the gracious interviews granted them by the Lord God on that day; and of the revelations made to them of the things contained in the blessing pronounced upon it when he "blessed and sanctified it."

5/ There is no record or hint of the existence of a penal statute for not observing the seventh day, from the sanctification of it till the raining down bread from heaven for the Israelites in the wilderness of Egypt.

6/ The observance of the seventh day by absolute rest from every kind of work and pleasure-taking, accompanied by a peculiar sacrifice on the brazen altar of the temple, and spiritual delight in its blessedness, was its Mosaic celebration enjoined upon the Israelites, and their dependents in Palestine, and upon them alone.

7/ Its profanation by citizens of the commonwealth of Israel was punishable with death by stoning.

8/ Israel was especially commanded to remember the seventh day and keep it as appointed by the law; because God in creating

their world brought them out of Egypt, and rested from the work of its creation when he gave them a temporary and typical rest under Joshua in the land of Canaan.

9/ For an Israelite to remember the seventh day and to keep it holy, spiritually as well as ceremonially, so as to obtain the blessing which it shadowed forth, he must have had an Abrahamic faith in the promised blessing, and have ceased or rested from the works of "sinful flesh".

10/ The blessing promised to Israelites who were Abraham's sons by faith as well as by fleshly descent, for a spiritual observance of the seventh day (and which, until "the handwriting," or Mosaic law, was blotted out and nailed to the cross, could not be spiritually observed and ceremonially profaned) was, that they should "delight in the Lord, ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed with the heritage of Jacob their father," when the time to fulfil the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, should arrive.

11/ The blessing pronounced on a national observance of the seventh day was, the uninterrupted continuance of the throne of David and great national prosperity. Its desecration to be punished by the breaking up of the commonwealth of Israel and desolation of their country.

12/ The Mosaic observance of the seventh day was appointed as "a sign" between God and the twelve tribes of Israel. It was a holy day to them, and to be observed perpetually throughout their generations (Matthew 1:17—the forty two generations from Abraham to Christ. Colossians 1:26).

13/ It was lawful for Israelites to do good on the seventh day; but they were not permitted to be the judges of the good or evil. This was defined by the law. The priests profaned the sabbath by hard work in slaying and burning the seventh day sacrifices on the altar, yet they were blameless; because this was a good work which the Lord of the Sabbath commanded them to do.

(to be continued)

A BIBLE CLASS

**“Remove not the old landmark;
and enter not into the fields of the fatherless.”
(Proverbs 23:10)**

A landmark is placed to mark the boundary or border between two pieces of property. The word landmark comes from a prime root meaning, to set bounds. When Israel inherited the land under the leadership of Joshua, each tribe and family had an ordered portion. In a practical sense a landmark is set as an indication of ownership. In a spiritual sense a landmark may be seen as God’s kind promises which were given by His word and commandments to enable His people to cherish and protect their promised inheritance and that of their brother as well.

The law warned not to remove the landmark of a neighbour, taking that which was his into your own possession. To remove an established landmark in a spiritual sense is to ignore or change the heavenly ordained boundaries established by His laws, to the endangerment of the eternal inheritance of His people. In this context the words of Solomon take on added insight:

**“Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers
have set.”** Proverbs 22:28.

In Israel the inheritance was to remain in each tribe and family, and if sold due to necessity, it would return under God’s kind law in the year of Jubile. Under this same law, usurping the lands of the fatherless was forbidden, especially if the marker was removed to increase one’s own boundaries:

**“Cursed be he that removed his neighbour’s landmark.
And all the people shall say, Amen.”**

Deuteronomy 27:17.

To do such would have been in effect stealing from God since it was His gift, pointing forward to the eternal inheritance promised. How could one possibly attain unto this sublime calling if there were no respect for a brother’s earthly inheritance? One who planned to defraud might think, no one would notice a

landmark moved a little at a time, but with God nothing is hidden and He who sees all, will require recompense for His little ones. How abominable to God when advantage is taken of the poor and the fatherless, those who are defenceless. The protector of God's children will plead their cause.

Job, a man known for his uprightness and integrity spoke out against such behavior saying:

"Why seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not see his days?

Some remove the landmarks; they violently take away flocks, and feed thereof.

They drive away the ass of the fatherless, they take the widow's ox for a pledge.

They turn the needy out of the way: the poor of the earth hide themselves together.

They reap every one his corn in the field: and they gather the vintage of the wicked.

They cause the naked to lodge without clothing, that they have no covering in the cold.

They pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor.

They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof."

Job 24:1-4,6-7,9,13.

Here there is no apparent control of the flesh's natural impulses, no feeling of brotherly love or endeavouring to be our brother's keeper. Rather there is exploitation of the weak and defenseless for personal gain. God, knowing the wickedness of man, established these laws to protect the poor and fatherless against such covetousness.

How mindful we should be to guard against any thought or action which would cheat or diminish the possessions of others, or take advantage of those who are defenceless, lest we be perceived by God to be rebels against His light and our own spiritual boundaries gone. God's laws are the landmarks of our inheritance. We alter them to our certain danger.

M. C. S.

**Dr. Thomas on the present Gulf Crisis (written in 1866)
(The Arabs and the Northern Powers)**

“Yahweh will beat off from the channel of the river (Euphrates) unto the stream of Egypt” (the Nile); and thereby subdue the whole south of the grant to Abraham “from sea to sea”, from the Mediterranean to the gulf of Persia.

When the south is thus freed from the domination of “the House of Esau” (Obadiah 18:21) the healing of Egypt will commence. “Yahweh shall smite Egypt and heal it; and they shall return to Yahweh, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them. This healing will be curative of all the population, Gentile and Jewish, that survives the heart-melting judgments of the crisis. Egypt will no longer be proverbial for its darkness that may be felt: for in the day of the Rainbowed Angel, “shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear (allegiance) to Yahweh Tz’vaoth, (to ‘him who shall be hosts’): one shall be called, The City of Destruction. In that day there shall be an altar to Yahweh in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to Yahweh. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto Yahweh Tz’vaoth in the land of Egypt.” And this is the reason of the destruction which gives name to one of the five cities; “for they shall cry unto Yahweh because of the oppressors,” as they did in the days of Moses: “and he shall send them a Saviour, even a great one (the Rainbowed Angel) and he shall deliver them. And Yahweh shall be known to Egypt and the Egyptians shall know Yahweh in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow to Yahweh, and perform it—.

Egypt appears to occupy a very important position in the restoration of Israel by the Rainbowed Angel. Egypt, Cush and Seba are appointed for their ransom (Isaiah 43:3)—. In reference to this crisis, the Spirit saith, “Remember ye not the former things neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye know know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert—.

This is all part of the work of the Rainbowed Angel, in which “Adon (the Lord) adds his hand to redeem a second time the remnant of his people which shall be left from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.” (Isaiah 11:11). This is an area of wide extent, stretching from the

Nile to the east of the Tigris; and thence north to the Caspian; and then westward to the Mediterranean, in and beyond which are the islands. It is not to be supposed, that such a revolution in the south of Asia and north of Africa, developing a new power of extraordinary might, could progress without making a powerful impression upon France, Turkey, and Russia, which are so sensitive in regard to their supposed interests in Egypt, the Red Sea, and the east. It will throw them all into a state of terrible belligerency. So great a danger will confederate them for a great effort to scatter it. All Europe will be moved; and "rush forth as a whirlwind to scatter me;" saith the Spirit: "their rejoicing was as to devour the poor in ambush"—Hab.3:14: "they will ascend and come like a storm and like a cloud to cover the land, that is (or that portion of it which is) brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, who are dwelling safely in the midst of it (Ezekiel 38) under the protection of the Rainbowed Angel. The conquest of Egypt will, doubtless operate powerfully upon England: for nothing can affect Egypt without greatly disturbing the policy of Britain, and deeply wounding her commercial interests. The Russo-Assyrian King of the north will have inflicted this injury upon England, previous to Yahweh riding into Egypt upon the swift rainbowed cloud. Hence, the invasion of Egypt, and the destruction of the power of the king of the north in Egypt, will, doubtless be rejoiced in by the British government—.

At this epoch, the land becomes prosperous—"a land of unwallled villages, whose inhabitants are at rest, and dwelling safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates. The desolate places of central Palestine are then inhabited, by a gathering out of the nations, which has become wealthy in cattle and goods"—Ezekiel 38:12. But this prosperity becomes an irresistible temptation to the king of the north to invade the land, and if possible to annex it to his dominion bordering upon it, by Hamath, Armenia, and Assyria. "He will ascend like a storm, like a cloud to cover the land;" for "tidings out of the east, and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall pitch the tents of his entrenched camp between the seas", the Mediterranean and sea of Tiberias, which will extend "to the mountain of glory of the holy"—Dan.11:44-45. Thus all the nations of this northern confederacy are gathered by

Yahweh against Jerusalem, after his descent to Sinai and before his own entrance into the city. He permits it to be taken, and rifled by the spoiler, and its inhabitants to be partly expelled and sent into exile—Zech.14:2.

Their hope would now seem to be lost, and themselves finally cut off from their parts—Ezek.37:11. They had, doubtless, thought that the long expected rest had been established beyond the possibility of disturbance. They were at rest in the midst of the land; but the whole house of Israel was not there; and the nations were not yet acquainted with the omnipotence of “the Kings of the Sun’s risings.”—In this region, his power is contested. “Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof,” protest against the invasion of the land, but without effect. Doubtless, he will feel too strong to be deterred from a grand solution of the Eastern Question in his own behalf. But “he shall be broken without hand”: the stone-power is near ready to fall upon him, and grind him to powder—the power of the kingdom embodied in the rainbow organisation (Matthew 21:44; Daniel 2:45; 8:25)

Comments on the above

The reader will see from the extracts given that it appears that Dr. Thomas suggested (125 years ago) at a time when the situation of the Middle East had not developed as it has today; that in the divine programme, the Arabs will be dealt with first. It is an interesting exposition.

Dr. Thomas’s position in relation to the Truth From remarks made in 1867

“— Dr. Thomas, enlightened by the truth, is different from Dr. Thomas in a state of ignorance. Enlightened by the truth, he is a safe “guide, philosopher, and friend,” in things pertaining to salvation. He is a faithful, fearless, competent expounder of the word divinely delivered through ancient prophets and apostles to Israel. Ignorant of these, he would be like the rest of professional dumb dogs—“learned” in the conventional sense, but afraid to bark out the words of confident warning with regard to the future, and incapable of saying anything of the slightest value for the guidance of the blind or the instruction of the ignorant. Great native power of intellect, matured by years of

study, have qualified him to discern clearly and declare truly, what is written in the ancient oracles. To what is written therein, he faithfully adheres, and as our readers know, asks credence to nothing on his own individual authority. His glory is that he magnifies the word of the God of Israel above all, and advances nothing on personal authority; while, at the same time, he applies with great industry and success, the masterly gifts with which God has endowed him, in the elucidation of things requiring a right division of the word of Truth, in order to their proper apprehension. To such a man, it is no shame to submit ourselves in the Lord. In such a man, every devout appreciator of Israel's good things will rejoice. But if any man insinuates a surrender of judgment on the part of the Christadelphians, or hints at degradation in the attitude acknowledged, we repudiate their suggestions as nothing else than the croakings of a narrow mind. We tell such that they show themselves to be ignorant or low-minded. If they knew the truth and were noble-minded, they would rejoice in everything and everybody associated with the truth's success. If they know the truth, and do not this, they are miserable, envious, narrow souls, full of selfish aims, utterly destitute of the jubilant, cheerful, glorious charity which rejoiceth in the truth, thinketh no evil, and hopeth all things; and they shall utterly perish in their own corruption. If they are not narrow souls, but expansive-minded, magnanimous, noble souls, and yet run down the due appreciation of one so set for the defence of the gospel as Dr. Thomas, it shews they are ignorant of the truth, and speak evil of the things they understood not, in which case their position is equally hopeless as in the other. A knowledge and love of the truth will dispose a man to feel very thankful that such a man as Dr. Thomas was ever raised up of God, and deaden him to all sense of the miserable shame of his name that creeps over some, who, but for Dr. Thomas, would have been floundering in the depths of orthodox superstition."

Signs of His Coming and of the End of the World

“For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”
(Matthew 24:27)

The troubles in the Middle East have greatly exercised Jewish minds, particularly those of the Jewish sect the Lubavitcher Hasidim from Russia, where they were townspeople and tradesmen, but in coming to Israel, and settling in the abandoned Arab village of Safariya, took up agricultural work. Hasidism started with Israel ben Eliezer, an impoverished orphan who lived in an obscure village in the Carpathians. After years of strange mystical study he emerged at the age of thirty six claiming he had special powers and gained a following among poor and ignorant Jews. The established Jewish religious authority objected to this emerging influence, but the new sect continued to gain a following in eastern Europe. By the end of the eighteenth century a new style of leadership in the Hasidim developed. The controlling director was named the tzaddik (holy one) and it was agreed his eldest son would inherit this position in the course of time. So began a number of self-perpetuating dynasties. The most famous were in Belz in Galicia, Sadagora in Bukovina, Ger in Poland and Lubavitsch in Russia. The staunch Hasidim visited the tzaddik (called also rebbe) at least three times a year, each time presenting him with a free-will offering. There were other occasions or emergencies when the rebbe was sought, and the people would listen intently to his cabalistic expositions of the law of Moses.

The present Lubavitcher rebbe, however, is not located in Russia. He is found in Brooklyn, New York, and came to media attention during the festival of Chanukah towards the end of last year, (the festival of lights, in memory of ancient resistance to Greek rule and the purification of the second Temple). The rebbe made a broadcast to the Lubavitcher Hasidim through a satellite link-up beamed to forty cities throughout the world. Speaking in Yiddish, the language of Eastern European Jews, he spoke of the miracles of the lights which were able to draw neighbours and nations together. These would reach God in the temple of the Heavens. “From the Heavens the lights would reach Israel, and

from Israel to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem to the Temple Mount" and "on the Temple Mount, in these days, would be the coming of the Moschiach and there would be a redemption - - - we would all go together to the Holy Land."

This Rabbi has been saying that a clash between the Iraqi forces and the American alliance in Arabia will shake the world "and the Messiah will come and proclaim that salvation is at hand." A Lubavitcher spokesman in Jerusalem has been speaking in a similar way saying, "The conflict in the Gulf is definitely part of the preparation for redemption," like labour pains, "But in the end what will come out is a new, living light, The Messiah - - -."

At the village of Kfar Chabad in Israel where there are several thousand Hasidim a sign has been put up saying, "Prepare yourself. The time of redemption is near." The local rebbe has instructed his people that there is no need to buy gas masks or hoard food, and that "Events in the Gulf do not have to disturb the spiritual and physical peace of a single Jew." He explains that a devastating war initiated by the Iraqis against the king of Arabia is predicted, which will subsequently destroy the entire world. But God watches over Israel at all times.

Some of the Lubavitchers are saying that their present rebbe (the senior leader) is the Messiah, though he has not yet revealed himself. This rebbe who married the youngest daughter of the previous rebbe, and so claimed the succession in opposition to his brother-in-law, has never been to Israel. But that has not daunted his followers who have built a four-storey building on the outskirts of Tel Aviv designed to look exactly as his Brooklyn residence to prepare for the outcome if the Gulf confrontation turns out to be the decisive battle and therefore the rebbe is the Messiah.

The things are more significant perhaps than generally realised. The Brooklyn rebbe has contact with world leaders, one of whom expressed that he prayed the Jewish religious leader would go from "strength to strength" and said he was an "inspiration to Jews and non-Jews alike." The Prime Minister of Israel joined in expressing his good wishes.

Here is a sign. The true Messiah will neither want or need good will expressions from World leaders. Jesus warned, " - - - if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ (Messiah) or there;

believe it not." (Matthew 24:23). He also warned of deceivers saying "- - - the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them." (Luke 21:8). The fact however remains that when there are some who are saying that Messiah's appearing is near, in context with a time of distress of nations upon earth, then truly He IS NEAR, though He will not come in the way they assume it will be.



NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

HAMBURG, NEW YORK, Corner Southwestern Blvd. & Pleasant Ave.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m.
Sunday School 1.45 p.m.
Bible Class: Midweek: Forestville and Hamburg
Alternate Week: RevelationStudy

Fearful expectations in the Middle East and thus in all the world affairs bring to the minds of His people Jesus' words:"... except the days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

Matthew 24.22

J. A. Def.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11 a.m.
Thursday: Bible Class 7.15 p.m.

As the year proceeds the signs in the world clearly reveal God's merciful outworking for His people as foretold by the prophets.

The future would be of dismay and darkness except for His message of hope and assurance that God is not aloof, but looking down upon all developments taking place in the nations. Ready to act, in His wisdom, to deliver His good earth from the evil, at the time appointed.