

JULY 1991

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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 that ye be not deceived"

"AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD"

"A BIBLE CLASS"

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"THIS IS THE BREAD WHICH THE LORD HATH GIVEN YOU..."

"1958 REVISITED"

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

"NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS"

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**AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD
"REMEMBERED OF YAHWEH"**

For the last several days we have been considering God's words through His prophet Zechariah. The prophet spoke these words to his brethren, now returned from captivity to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel and Jeshua. Their work was to restore the temple and the city, as commissioned by Cyrus when God's directing hand had come upon this Persian king in the seventieth year of Judah's captivity. About fifty thousand had returned from their Babylonian captivity and had begun this work. First an altar was built and offerings were made to the Almighty who had in mercy granted their deliverance. Next, they commenced the rebuilding of the temple; however, this was hindered by adversaries already dwelling in the land. Because of this, the work ceased for fourteen years until the Almighty sent His prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, to strengthen their brethren's hands to resume the work. Through this help and encouragement, and above all through the divine hand upon them, in time God's house was completed. As our brethren in that shattered city were stirred up to continue this great work, so too may we be encouraged in our labor for His house today, although in the midst of a world adversarial to God and His people. His helping hand is needed indeed for these are evil times; distracting and negative influences abound and can prevent or discourage our being diligently occupied in those privileged duties.

With this in mind let us give heed to Zechariah's instruction and prophetic message, not overlooking that his very name (remembered of Yahweh) speaks of the importance of the work to be performed. This would also speak to our brethren faced with a task which at times must have seemed gargantuan. God does remember His prophets and indeed all His people for good, especially as He sees desire and struggle to honor and obey Him.

Let us listen then to the help granted to our brethren in Jerusalem by this prophet. Zechariah was a young man and a priest; he would feel the responsibility to stir up those who had been stopped in the building by adversaries. Thus to him the Almighty's purpose was revealed through certain visions so that he might tell his brethren and inspire them to carry on valiantly. The first vision given to Zechariah revealed a man riding upon a red horse with other horses following. When the prophet asked

what this meant, the Almighty's angel responded:

“... These are they whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth.”
Zechariah 1:10.

Then this messenger responded:

“... We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.”
Zechariah 1:11.

How difficult it would be for those in the rubble of Jerusalem to visualize such a time of peace and rest. Indeed it was not their time for repose, but rather for hard labor with discouragement at times. Today in a world beset with violence, turmoil and warfare, it is hard to keep our minds also serene and fastened upon these promises. The recent Persian Gulf conflict certainly has interested us as people knowing God's purpose in the Middle East. It is impressive to see how much the world has been stirred up and fearfully watching these events. Now there is urgent seeking for peace, and with this, a seeking to end the conflict between Israel and the Arab nations with a hope to bring in a “new world order”. We know God has ordained this enmity between “Jacob and Esau” and therefore these hopes cannot prosper until the Prince of Peace comes, joined by His faithful and immortal people, to bring upon the enemies of righteousness the Spirit's judgment. Peace and righteousness always has been the hope of the faithful in Israel. It was the hope of those early brethren rebuilding the temple, and it is our hope today. It is this “lively hope” which must be foremost in mind if the work of God's people is to prosper.

God through Zechariah speaks of judgments to come upon those who troubled Israel, through a vision concerning four carpenters who:

“... are come to fray them, to cast out the horns (powers) of the Gentiles, which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it.”
Zechariah 1:21.

Again the prophet brought to remembrance the unfailing purpose of Yahweh to defend and ultimately establish His people, Israel, in that promised land as their inheritance. Any

nation who attempts to interfere in that purpose will be “frayed” or caused to tremble and quake—as they are brought down under His mighty power. This is a far cry indeed from the atmosphere which surrounded those few Jews engaged in rebuilding His house during the restoration. They were surrounded by Gentile powers seeking their destruction. So God in mercy brought to remembrance their hope, promising to sustain in that work through these messages to Zechariah.

In a further vision the Almighty again reminded our brethren to take courage, for He promised:

“... Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein.”

Zechariah 2:4

Of those in Jerusalem some were laboring to build the city walls, as a defense and bulwark against their enemies. Yet God’s word reminded them that in His timely purpose:

“... I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.”

Zechariah 2:5.

A time to come for rejoicing with all the heart! Nevertheless, as those “feeble Jews” looked upon the partially rebuilt temple, standing amidst the overgrown ruins of their city, how far off this state would seem. Yet it was God’s word, the hope of Israel, sent to inspire in His people a rising above the present circumstances, once again with a willing heart taking up the work.

Can these words also invigorate us, Brethren and Sisters, to zealously carry on with whatever work the calling of God places upon us, increasingly sustained in the hope of being enveloped in Israel’s hope? Even as you and I do at times, those in Jerusalem may have paused in their work and pondered: How ever can this promise come about? The Almighty, knowing man’s need, sent help again and again. Remember, with Judah was their high priest, Jeshua (Joshua), whom God used in a vision to allay their fears and doubts. In the vision Joshua was clothed in filthy garments (Zechariah 3:3) causing the Almighty to command:

“... Take away the filthy garments...I will clothe thee with change of raiment....
Let them set a fair mitre upon his head...”

Zechariah 3:4-5.

Although Joshua was the high priest in Jerusalem then, there was not yet a temple in which to serve. Zechariah’s vision would encourage him to begin again the work of rebuilding, sustained in the knowledge that in time he would be permitted to rejoice in his duties as high priest, clothed in the beautiful garments of his office. Further the prophet’s words carried our brethren’s minds forward some five hundred years when in God’s purpose Jesus (Joshua) would put off His fleshly nature, taking up His work as High Priest at God’s right hand. Israel’s high priest wore a fair mitre upon which was a plate of gold engraven with “HOLINESS TO THE LORD” (Exodus ch. 28:36)—a foretelling of Jesus, the only mortal to perfectly exhibit that holiness as He gave His life to His Father, the Lamb unblemished by sinning. Here through Zechariah, Yahweh spoke, bringing to remembrance His sure promises of their Messiah to come.

To the men and women of Israel was then revealed how this wonderful purpose would come about:

“...behold I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.”

Zechariah 3:8,10.

This BRANCH, Jesus, is to come, bringing in the heralded kingdom of God. some two hundred years before Zechariah, Isaiah also prophesied of this:

“In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious,...

And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and...remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living (in God’s book of life?) in Jerusalem:

...there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and a covert from storm and from rain.”

Isaiah 4:2-6.

Through all the ages the glorious hope of Israel has been mercifully retold to encourage and sustain those striving for it. To the workers in Jerusalem that day no doubt seemed far removed. Yet through God, ever watchful for His children's needs, bringing this to their remembrance, our brethren were in faithful zeal to resume that work, even though so few in the midst of much trouble. When we think of this heartening provision granted through these visions of Zechariah, is it not a strong incentive even today, Brethren and Sisters, to be more diligent, making the care and work of His house first in our desires, made strong by this hope of Israel most surely unfolding? We live some 2500 years after these words were spoken, and much of that word already has been fulfilled. Should this not increase our faith, our anticipation and yes, our fear as well, for that day of the LORD soon to come to pass, of which Zechariah wrote:

“... Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD:

... and shall sit and rule upon his throne; ...

And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.” Zechariah 6:12-15.

“If ye will”, saith our God. Brethren and Sisters, let us respond strongly: Yes, dear Father, we will, with all our hearts.

J. A. DeF.



A BIBLE CLASS

“If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities” Psalm 130:3

David's appreciation for the mercy and grace of God towards His children is the subject of this particular psalm. This is one of the “Songs of Degrees” (or ascent) for those going up to Zion, conveying the hope of all His people. Part of this thought of going up, is realizing that any climb is difficult, requiring effort, reminding us of the words of the Lord Jesus:

“Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few that be that find it.”

Matthew 7:14.

God’s way of life is narrow, and along it are His law and commandments as signposts to guide and warn of danger. If one disregards the help of His word he will find himself in trouble, sliding off the path or veering in a wrong direction, that if continued will not end in the hoped for destination of Zion.

David sometimes found himself in danger of falling, and cried unto God:

“Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD.”

verse 1.

During our time of probation sometimes we find ourselves exceedingly cast down because of serious failure. Only as forgiveness is sought with humble confession are we able to look up and go on. David knew he needed lifting up and cried out to God as the only source of sure help. This thought of “the depths” appears in another Psalm penned by David:

“Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.”

Psalm 69:1-2.

Here David cried out in distress when the way was difficult, just as Jonah cried from the belly of the whale:

“Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish’s belly,

And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.

For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and the waves passed over me.,

Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward the holy temple”.

Jonah 2:1-4.

Jonah suffered hardship because of failure to do what God had commanded. He ignored the signposts along the way and instead chose his own path. Yet he knew that if he repented, God would hear his prayer, forgive and not mark iniquity.

We must realize that an essential part of seeking God is through confession of sin, as seen in David and Jonah's example, for only then will iniquity not be marked. The great danger and inclination of the flesh is to deny sin or minimize it and thus deceive ourselves. Only the Lord Jesus was without fault and therefore only through His name is redemption possible:

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." I John 1:8-10.

David realized that forgiveness would not be possible without God's longsuffering mercy. This is the focus of this verse under consideration—the contemplation of God's immeasurable kindness to man, who as a sinning creature is not deserving:

"If thou, LORD shouldst mark iniquities, O LORD, who shall stand?"
verse 3.

To mark means to consider and who should be able to stand if God remembered iniquities? What blessedness to know that, with humble acknowledgment and through the One who can atone, God wipes away the sin of which we are all guilty.

Indeed God's willingness to forgive has always been present, even from the very beginning when after the fall in the garden He provided a covering of skins, involving a shedding of blood to cover the iniquity of Adam and Eve.

David, though a great ruler, was a humble man who recognized that his failures hindered him from being acceptable at times. As King over Israel, his hope was the hope extended to all God's people as the 7th verse conveys:

"Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption."

They were God's people—his chosen nation to whom He had made the promise of everlasting life—possible through the

“plenteous redemption” paid for with the life of the Lord Jesus, the Messiah which would come from David’s own line.

At the time of the end, the judgments of God will be brought upon an unbelieving world by Christ and His saints. In that day when there is time no longer, forgiveness will not be found and in their distress they will cry out to the mountains and rocks:

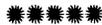
“...Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:
For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”
Revelation 6:16-17.

During this time, God will punish iniquity and none shall be able to stand, save those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb and whose iniquities have not been marked because they sought God during their time of probation with repentance and humility as Spirit Israelites in hope that:

“...he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.”

verse 8.

M.C.S.



Partial Inspiration—the trouble of 1885 (continued)

(The proper consideration of the difficulties will best be promoted by their impersonal statement in numerical order—from “The Christadelphian”).

2. That the compilers were uninspired is proved by the fact that Matthew (correctly according to Dr. Thomas) quotes a prophecy from Jeremiah, which the compilers have placed in Zechariah. Answer:- The last six chapters in Zechariah are not said to be the writing of Zechariah, as his other chapters are. They are anonymous. They are bound up with his book. The Spirit of God in Matthew virtually tells us they were written by Jeremiah. How they came to be placed with Zechariah, we should quite understand, if we knew; but we are not justified in making use of the circumstances against the character of the contents of the chapters themselves or of any other chapters. Compilation is a mere placing together. What was placed together was the word of God, by His servants—Jesus and the apostles being witness.

It would be the word of God wherever placed.

3. The copyists were not inspired is evident from the "laterhand" we read and from the fact that the copies differ.

Answer:- It is not necessary to contend for the inspiration of copyists. They were erring, fallible men; but still, quite as capable of doing their work correctly as copyists in our own day. Men copy ordinary documents in every-day life correctly: much more was it likely they would do so in a work undertaken with almost superstitious scrupulosity, and for which men specially prepared themselves; the copyists were a check upon one another in many ways, not only by revision, but by comparison. This comparison in our own day is the best guarantee we could have of the substantial accuracy of the text forming the basis of our translation. It is shewn by the nearly absolute agreement of their manuscripts in all languages and in all parts of the world. There are variations, but they are slight: they do not affect the integrity of the text except in one or two disputed cases, upon which no truth wholly hangs. There is no comparison between the Bible and the MSS. of other ancient books as regards the purity of the original text shewn by the agreement of manuscripts.

4. Surely such utterances as the challenge of Rabshakeh to Hezekiah; and Nebuchadnezzar's decree against the wise men, etc., were not inspired: surely these were the uninspired conception of their authors?

Answer:- No doubt of it; but their insertion in the Scriptures is the result of a divine selection in Isaiah, Daniel, etc., and therefore a guarantee of their truth and their usefulness. Inspiration is needed to select as well as to compose, when the selection is for divine ends: inspiration has no more special function than this. The uninspired human mind would not be able to guarantee truth when relying upon the information of others; nor would it know what would be servicable in a history intended to subserve divine objects in the readers. In natural authorship, ability has no more effectual sphere for the exhibition of its gifts and the effectuation of its aims than in the selection and editing of materials. The same materials in two men's hands will appear very different when served up. The "God inspired" character of the Scriptures is manifest in nothing more than in the selection of uninspired utterances that were essential to the object of their being written.

(to be continued)

**“THIS IS THE BREAD WHICH THE LORD HATH
GIVEN YOU TO EAT”**

Exodus 6:15

Today we have finished the yearly plan for our daily reading of God’s word. This word, as Paul reveals:

“...is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (Timothy 3:16-17.

Our Father has caused it to be written by holy men inspired by His Spirit. the origin of the word “inspire” involves two aspects: God and to breathe in. By His breath God gave life to Adam whom He molded from the dust of the ground and thus was formed a living creature (Genesis 2:7). The Almighty breathed of this same Spirit into His witnesses, and what they wrote became His living word. That word helps us to live spiritually, and it is indeed profitable, enabling us to gain, to heap up or to benefit.

As we end our portions for this year and prepare to start anew tomorrow, it may help to look back over these past twelve months. Have we profited, have we grown in spiritual strength, have we been lifted up in our every-day circumstances, to think better, to increase in faith as well? We know it is difficult to measure progress day to day, for we do get enmeshed in the daily happenings and chores as they come to our attention. It is therefore a benefit to stop and consider the circumstances which have arisen since March 31, 1990. Our Father has been good to us, helping, providing for us in practical things, healing in illness, strengthening in trial, overseeing our lives. How comforting has been His guidance, His correction, His ever-loving kindness. We have lost a brother as God has ended his sojourn in this life, but he has hope of the eternal life when Jesus returns. This loss may cause that hope to be a bit more real, important and surely near.

The world has seen much change in the last twelve months. There has been warfare, sudden victory for some, grim defeat for others. The optimists now feel a hope for peace, a “new world order”, especially in the Middle East. That there will never be true peace between the Arabs and Israel—the children of Esau and the children of Jacob—is for us a certainty. Clearly we are told that there is no lasting solution for the world’s woes while

men rule the nations and disregard God and His word. The only new order is the one which is to bring destruction of the present evil order, the "old heavens and old earth", and the establishment of a "new heaven and a new earth", ruled justly and righteously by the Son of God. This is sure and will come in God's purpose. How is this known? From His inspired, and to us, most profitable word. We long for His coming and this sure change; but we know it will come only when it is the Father's time. This hope must be nourished and sustained, and thus His people must feed upon the spiritual food which He has provided.

With these thoughts in minds, let us look closely at that help of which we have partaken this morning in his word. Job was God's servant who suffered a year of affliction and hardship. This, given by God Himself, was a test of his determination to keep integrity without bitterness or resentment. The Almighty, knowing Job's spirit, allowed this for his ultimate profit and for vindication from the adversary's malignant accusations. Through twelve wretched and painful months Job never forsook His soundness of spirit, never cursed God. Like any jealous and fleshly-minded individual, the adversary thought of Job in relation to his own thoughts and inclinations, and never as a child of God thinks. He believed Job, like himself in trial, would allow sin to get the upper hand. But God, rightly judging Job, had declared him to be an upright and perfect man, fearing God and shunning evil. This test would prove His spirit. Because he did fear, and most importantly loved God, perceiving His mercy and grace, Job was sustained through that dreadful year. He suffered, agonizing to remain steadfast regardless of adversity, in spite of the hypocritical advice and rebuke of his "friends". Their "words" did not help nor profit, but Job had other "words" in his heart, and so as the year ended he could look back and see the enlarged and clearer purpose. There was affliction, trial, even despair at times, but he did indeed profit under God's merciful hand. His mind, his spirit is expressed for us as he reviewed experiences:

"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee."
Job 42:5.

Our faithful brother had heard, had known, had absorbed the word of God; this, no doubt, directed him to integrity, hating falseness, spiritually building him to a "perfect man". But was

this enough? Did he further profit through the experiences of this painful year? He obviously did greatly gain, for at the end he could say:

“...but now mine eye seeth thee.” Job 42:5.

Here was a new enlightenment to his perception. It is written that no man can look upon God and live, yet Job’s eyes more truly envisioned Him. How could this be? Did not Job perceive more personally and closely God’s never ending forbearance and forgiveness? Did he now realize that lacking these blessings he would be without hope? Before this ordeal he has been well blessed, indeed considered to be “the greatest of all the men of the east”. He had an abundance in this life, yet all was removed in God’s wisdom and our brother was brought very low, but was sustained by God’s words to him. did he not value that sustaining power to a greater degree as he experienced the Father’s hand in his time of need? Was he more ready to reach out for it? As he heard the hypocritical words of his “friends” did he perceive the sincerity and purity in God’s word and in His working with His children? Were Job’s eyes opened to how truly great is the Almighty’s love extended beyond measure to those who fear and love Him? Did not God in that love cause Job to experience the terrible trial so that his eyes might become more fully open to His perfect love as well as to divine righteousness and justice? Surely Job would grow in awareness that he, a mere mortal, had no strength, hope, or future. A perishing creature was he, existing only by God’s longsuffering. We can now sense the reason for Job’s confession:

“Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” Job 42:6.

“Abhor” speaks of contempt, loathing or despising. Job saw himself for what he naturally was and loathed his flesh, realizing afresh the need to repent. Perhaps he was cognizant of God’s words:

“...Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.” Leviticus 19:2.

Clearly he realized his need to develop toward holiness. Brethren and Sisters, to reflect upon these thoughts of Job can be a valuable help to us. Let us look to Him who only is holy, com-

prehending more each year as we read His word how we must work to leave behind those aspects of character which may appear to be unholy.

Our second portion is the last book of the Old Testament, written by Malachi, named by God “my messenger”. This message speaks:

“...the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.”

Malachi 4:1.

Those who are proud, moving presumptuously away from and without regard for God, in the end will be destroyed. But in mercy and kindness the Almighty promises:

“But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.”

Malachi 4:2.

Might we not feel—Am I not now spiritually growing up? I am aware of God’s mighty ways. But would we be wise and more clearly understand ourselves if we cultivated that spirit of Job, “I abhor myself, and repent”? Indeed, how insignificant and lacking we are; how much we do need to spiritually mature. The source of that growth is the food provided in God’s word which is profitable, making us develop in mind and spirit; for how ever diligent we may be, we can never pay back our Father for His abundance toward us. Truly we are “unprofitable servants” at best. And still He loves His children for their efforts to please Him.

Also this morning we have received the word of life from our chapter in the last book, the Revelation to John, unfolding to him “things which must shortly come to pass”—the culmination of all His word, those truly glad tidings of Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God. We have listened to Jesus’ words declared to John:

“I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.”

Revelation 22:13.

In Jesus is incorporated all the word and purpose of the Father. We remember John's record:

"In the beginning was the Word....
And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John 1:1,14.

"We beheld His glory"—John did see the Lord Jesus; touched Him, heard the words from His mouth; and here, some sixty years later, is permitted to behold Him in this divinely-given vision, listening to His words: "I am Alpha and Omega...." From the beginning, from the first words of God, Jesus was in His purpose. He is the firstborn from the dead. He is the latter end, the utmost unfolding and accomplishment of that word. Let us listen then to these last words, preserved for us by a loving Father through His faithful Son:

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen...." Revelation 22:20.

That word will not fail; it is our hope, our anchor, that to which we cling and partake of for profit, to grow in our spirits. There is no other source of nourishment; it is and must be our daily food. Indeed, "This is the bread which the LORD had given (us) to eat." (Exodus 16:15) We have partaken of it through this last year; we will start anew tomorrow. Let us rejoice that it is given for us and is perfect for our growth into a spiritual man. So watching, believing, partaking, let us join in John's words of true hope and longing:

"...Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Revelation 22:20.

J. A. DeF



"1958 Revisited."

The Remnant has been in receipt of a book having the above title, in which certain in Australia have made endeavour to focus on the failure of what was purported to be a re-union in Australia.

The Remnant does not have room to quote in full the details received, but will try to outline, in giving extracts as follows:-

Introduction

In 1958, many Christadelphians in Australia believed that all problems related to the statement of faith were resolved. The history of our brotherhood since that time has shown that this is not so. In 1958, the "Shield" brethren felt that the Christadelphian editor had leaned toward their point of view, and that the Unity agreement reflected that generous and sympathetic attitude. It was accepted as being compatible with "Shield" teachings, and "Shield" brethren were not of the opinion that they were required to change their belief. Certainly many of them did not do so. In the atmosphere of the time, the Unity book, when it was published, was not subjected to critical analysis, and the sections critical of the old pre-1958 Central fellowship in Australia were perceived by many "Shield" brethren as supporting their position.

Other brethren - - - subsequently very largely separated into a distinct grouping of ecclesias, have assumed that the events of 1958 accomplished by diplomacy and negotiation what the previous 50 years had failed to accomplish by reasoning from the Scriptures, namely the demise of the distinctive "Shield" teachings, which, we believe, had substantially set forth the truth in the matters of controversy. These misunderstandings on both sides have given rise to the divisions which have occurred since 1958, and to events such as the cancellation of the 1988 conference, which are sure signs that the events of 1958 have not been blessed. - - -. The "peace" that has occurred in the past 30 years has consisted of a withdrawal from controversy by the members of the former "Shield" ecclesias, accompanied by an escalating assertiveness on behalf of those - - - (giving) the impression that the "Central fellowship" doctrines have prevailed.

This booklet attempts to redress that impression - - - that this might begin a movement towards a better understanding - - - and - - - of the need for a better and more scriptural basis of fellowship.

An Open Review of a Secret Document

We have a document before us, containing a summary of

discussions between the arranging brethren of two ecclesias. One of these ecclesias has a history going back into the former "Shield" fellowship - - -. The other ecclesia was one which has, since its establishment, been associated with the "Logos". Both of these ecclesias meet under the "Unity basis" but up to the present time there is virtually no fraternal association or fellowship between them.

The document carries a statement that it is confidential to the members of the former of the two ecclesias, and while in these circumstances it might seem improper for us to comment on it, we have concluded (after prayerful consideration) that the nature of the propositions are such that it seems essential that we should make some testimony concerning them. To do so will unavoidably give offence to some, a situation that we sincerely regret. We will endeavour to make clear our perception of the urgency and seriousness of the matter without making any personal attacks and without questioning the sincerity of those who have assembled the document. However, we cannot accept that a document which has been assembled for the purpose of having such doctrines as these accepted by a large number of brothers and sisters can be protected from challenge by such a device as its stated confidentiality.

The numbers in brackets refer to the numbered paragraphs in the original documents, while the letters P and N signify positive and negative as indicated in the original document.

The Remnant's comment

The details of the document are quoted by our correspondent which indicates that a form of words was used with positive and negative clauses, which at the time appears to have worked to bring about the general acquiescence of "Shield" members, which our correspondent implies only led to a very unsatisfactory situation. The book we have received goes on to say:-

"Never has it been more apparent that the traditional Christadelphian doctrine of the atonement, as summarized in the B.A.S.F., and reflected in the document under discussion, is a delusion. Worse than that, never has it been more apparent that the way Christadelphians have sought to establish this doctrine as the official orthodoxy of our brotherhood, and to exclude and stifle dissent, is also wrong. Ask yourself "Does this never ending straining over documents and words reflect the

contention for the faith by Jesus and his disciples of the first century?"

In a magazine from the same source a further comment is made as follows:-

"We believe that time, and the publication of the Unity Book has shown that the "Shield" brethren were deceived, an idea that many find impossible to accept even now. We want it to be clearly understood that we are NOT saying that Brother Carter deliberately deceived them. It came about because what was being attempted was the reconciliation of two ideas that are irreconcilable ---. That Brother Carter acted sincerely, and that he was in fact sympathetic to some expressions of the "Shield" doctrine we have no doubt; but he died soon after the Unity agreement was brought into effect, and his sympathies are now a matter of conjecture. What remains is what he wrote, and that, as it well perceived by today's protagonists for the "Central" doctrine, made no concessions to the "Shield" position at all-. The Unity agreement is now thirty years old, and its mode of operation is clear. It establishes fellowship between the factions, but only as long as there is no true fellowship. There has been a de facto division of our brotherhood into two groups for nearly all of that thirty years—in fact it was well and truly apparent in some areas long before the "Unity" agreement came into force.

It is proposed that a lot of "lateral thinking" is allowable under the "Unity Basis". This is another of the euphemisms that are used to hide the sad reality of our situation. Instead of describing the brotherhood as being confused and divided, it is said that there is "dichotomy", which sounds so much better than a "division". The "dichotomy" is not a real division, after all, because both sides "accept the Unity basis". It is a "Claytons" division which we can have without admitting that we are having a real division."

The Remnant has questioned on more than one occasion in the past the scriptural validity of the Christadelphian re-union endeavours. Without a true application of the doctrine of fellowship no good can come of it.

What the Remnant said in 1973

--- Christendom in spite of being divided by their many doctrinal differences are re-uniting. Doctrines of their various sects are being surrendered or muted in the notion that:

sects are being surrendered or muted in the notion that:

“We are all the children of God, we are all brethren. The causes of the divisions of the past are not our concern. We are all children of the same God, brethren of the same Christ. We are really one.”

Let it be carefully noted that the basis for the re-union of the sects in Christendom is the declaration that all are brethren--the leaven of regarding all Christadelphians as “brethren” has provided the basis for re-union just as in Christendom. - - - The communique issued in the Christadelphian, June 1973 states:

“We have educated each other in the matters which concerned us - - -. The latter three (discussions) have been an education to each committee.” “Educated each other”—in what? How to submerge a divine command in a multitude of words to effect another re-union?

What the Remnant said in 1977

Many are the Christadelphian magazines claiming to uphold the Statement of Faith. The Partial Inspirationists did so in 1885, although flagrantly in breach of an important doctrine - - - it can be imagined what juggling with words were necessary to bring about what was called “Re-union”. Reunion of some members, but no re-union based upon withholding good doctrine. When the final vote was taken in the various meetings—Central and Suffolk St.—re-union was only accomplished by a majority vote. What of those who were in opposition but went with the tide? Does it now show clearly that it was only Re-union in name?

A last remark

The Remnant takes no pleasure in placing these matters on record. But surely such a situation ought to be faced up to. The scripture gives a clear direction of what is required:-

“- - - walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called
- - -. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the
bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit - - -.”

(Ephesians 4:1-4)

Our readers are invited to send for our booklet, the Doctrine of Fellowship.

Signs of His Coming and of the End of the World

“Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish- -
shall say- -.” (Ezekiel 38:13)

The scriptural reference that the Tarshish power will speak words of authority and challenge along with Sheba and Dedan indicates that at the time of the prophecy the merchant powers will be concerned with Sheba and Dedan, against a northern threat to the stability of Southern Arabia, and of course of Israel, which the prophecy chiefly concerns.

Such a consideration brings reminiscences of the expositions of Dr. Thomas, who explained how to look at scriptural use of ancient names in connection with prophetic outcome in these last days. It is not necessarily races of men that are being referred to. But rather territories known by the names of the ancient peoples who inhabited them. Thus Sheba and Dedan become a formidable power in the earth in these last times, not of themselves but because those territories are allied to a great maritime power. Therefore powerful forces who are active in Sheba become prophetically the men of Sheba and Dedan, which in ancient times was the area of Saudi-Arabia and adjoining territories.

That the United States particularly, along with Britain, are those supportive powers in the Middle East, is beyond question. Oil beneath the desert sands has irrevocably drawn them there, regarded as essential for their market economies. The Gulf War therefore saw latter day Tarshish ensconced in that inhospitable region in tremendous force. But as events moved on it was also evident there was no real relish for keeping United States troops in Arabia for longer than could be helped, because of the extreme temperatures in those barren wastes. Not conducive, the military wisely thought for keeping soldier morale for any length of time.

However, the United States has now confirmed there are negotiations for establishing a permanent Gulf military presence at an army base in Bahrain, as an advanced headquarters for Central Command. An American government spokesman has said, “We have had a naval presence in the Gulf since 1949 and we will continue to have that.” Also Air Force presence would be in terms of airplanes that would be flying in and out on temporary tours of duty and for training missions. Such a military presence supports and enforces American policies in the area, giving the United States a political voice amongst the Arabs. It is indeed a fulfilment of the ancient prophecy, as part of the divine plan for the ultimate establishing of His Kingdom.

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: Revelation Study

By the time this is in print two from here, God willing, will be privileged in visiting our brethren and sisters in Manchester. This visit, it is expected, will bring pleasure and spiritual uplift to themselves and to all the brethren and sisters here and there.

Newspaper advertising concerning significant Bible prophecies has brought little response. It is now planned to appeal by mail, in the spirit of "Cast thy bread upon the waters". This is to be done over a period of several months.

J. A. DeF

MANCHESTER, *Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.*

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

Even while we prepare for a circularising of the general public, requests still arrive from previous contacts far and wide asking for our literature. Interesting letters also continue to be received with questions or comments which give an opening for our witness to continue.