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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

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All Communications

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

J. A. DeFries,
146 Gardner Street,
Fredonia,
New York 14063,
U.S.A.

**AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD
"THE BIGGER PICTURE"**

As we are close to the end of March, there are circumstances that cause us to consider our position. First, our reading plan will be finished for the year. Secondly, spring arrived last week. Thirdly, we are one month closer to the year 2000 when the "new millennium" begins. These things may seem unrelated, but careful consideration will show they can have a great effect upon our lives.

Many are deeply concerned about the future and what it holds for this earth. To most it is a puzzle. The few who truly seek God, striving to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, know what the future will bring. How can they know? The Word of the Almighty clearly reveals His purpose with this earth, and as we read it each year, His plan becomes even clearer. Perhaps we can compare the reading of His Word to the completing of a puzzle, with a multitude of pieces, each with its place in the finished picture. When not yet assembled, we cannot envision the whole picture. But as each piece "finds" its proper place, the whole begins to be revealed, and we marvel that the pieces exactly fit together as an identifiable and wonderful whole. To fit it all together requires concentration, patience, diligence and a strong desire to see the final result. It might be said that our daily readings are like this, each portion containing a facet of the whole. Little by little the whole of what God is helping us to grasp emerges that which He has had in mind for the earth since its creation - God's divine plan and purpose, to be accomplished through His Son Jesus Christ.

As we come to an end and prepare to begin afresh, let us ask: Are we able to better discern the wondrous plan revealed to us by our Father? Are we growing stronger in faith and in the struggle to be a part of that wonderful and glorious whole which is soon to become a reality through Jesus? Most do not perceive God's true purpose for this earth, which He created almost 6000 years ago.

An example of this lack of understanding is seen as we consider spring, a time of year which gladdens the heart for the weather is warmer, the snow is over and gone, and the flowers begin to bloom again, giving the feeling of a new birth after the long winter. We know spring began on March 20th, at 8:56 PM, the time of the vernal equinox when the sun, crossing the equator, makes night and day equal in length throughout the earth at that moment. How wonderfully He has made this, so predictable that man can tell exactly to the minute when

it will occur - a witness to the marvel of God's creation, unchanging, certain. One outstanding spring event is Easter, when the world celebrates the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. When we look up Easter in Webster's dictionary, it is defined as a pagan vernal festival dedicated to Eastre, the goddess of dawn. This was later adopted by the Roman church as a time to celebrate Jesus' resurrection. Its date varies, being held upon the first Sunday following the first full moon, which occurs on or after March 21st the vernal equinox. But these are the thoughts and plans of man! What a contrast to the everlasting, never varying arrangements of God's plan, based upon His word. Why is this so? Is it because man, left to his own devices and without strong desire, cannot truly discern God's unchanging plan - the great propose revealed in His word, which He has had in mind since the beginning?

Shortly the year 2000 will be upon us, a new millennium, the seventh since the creation. There is very great concern over what will happen on January 1, 2000, since the majority of the world's computers cannot cope with the mechanics of the change in date from 1999 to 2000. This is caused by the failure to look ahead to the new millennium at the time of setting aside only two spaces (i.e., 99 for 1999) to designate the year portion for the date. As a consequence when 2000 arrives, computers could shut down, crippling much of man's essential services. Many, anticipating such a situation, are stockpiling food and other essentials to guard against this possibility. Is this not a very telling example of how man, unable to anticipate or to see God's bigger picture, fails in his efforts to be master of his own fate? Literally millions of dollars and untold hours are being expended to straighten out a single oversight in their scientific accomplishments made many years ago. Thought provoking, is it not?

How blessed we are, Brethren and Sisters, to be able to see the bigger picture, helped to put together the pieces bit by bit, until it becomes clear, sure, and perfect! As each day we read God's word, we see a part of His complete purpose unfolding - not according to pagan superstition, nor by scientific knowledge, nor according to man's vision, imagination or mental skill - but by the Word of God.

With this in mind, let us look at that Word as we near the end of this year's reading plan. We have listened this morning to Job, Zechariah and John (Revelation). Let us first look at Zechariah. This prophet (along with Haggai) was sent to the Jews who, under God's hand, had returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple after 70 years of captivity

in Babylon. However, this work was interrupted for 14 years when Israel's adversaries appealed to Persia's king to stop this work. The Almighty sent Zechariah and Haggai to stir up His people to renew their rebuilding efforts by showing them His purpose - the bigger picture - which He had in mind for His people. Zechariah was given ten visions (Zechariah chapters 1-6) to convey to Israel. God concluded these visions (of a time to come) as he spoke through His prophet:

“... 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 he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne:

... this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.”
Zechariah 6;12-13,15.

The BRANCH, Jesus Christ, is yet to return to build His house, as the Almighty has revealed. How encouraging these words would be to our brethren in Jerusalem, helping them to resume their building. We have further read this morning of the purpose spoken by God:

“... the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the king, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar.”

Zechariah 14:9,16,20.

Here is the final purpose of God accomplished: Jesus Christ, king in Jerusalem, ruling over all the earth, with those to be approved at His coming judgment seat serving with Him as the bowls (vessels) of the altar, meet for His use!

Also this morning in Revelation, we have seen those approved “vessels” as saints before the throne of God and His Son, giving praise:

“... I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia:

Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:

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And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

... These are the true sayings of God."

Revelation 19: 1,6-9.

Here is the wonderful and longed-for purpose of God accomplished through His Son, Jesus Christ. It is the bigger picture! It is to this hope we look, we strive, we pray - to be included in this marvelous blessing when Christ returns. Cannot we see why John, as he saw this revelation granted in God's mercy, wrote:

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Revelations 22:20.

What grace, what mercy as we are allowed to see our God's purpose in Jesus Christ revealed, as the last piece of the puzzle falls into place! Can we, Brethren and Sisters, having been nourished by His word for another year, say, as did Job at the end of the long trial of his integrity:

"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Job 42:5-6.

Should this not be our reaction as we are permitted to see the perfection of His purpose? Do we recognize our own unworthiness, loathe our fleshly nature, reject it, and so struggle to conform to the measure of God's perfect man, the Lord Jesus Christ?

J.A.DeF

"HE THAT HATH CLEAN HANDS"

In our recent readings in Job, we again examine the discourse between Job and his supposed "friends", who came to be with him in his time of trial. He had lost everything, not only his possessions but his children as well. Understandably, he was grief stricken and sorely in need of comfort when his three friends arrived:

"Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him.

And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.

So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great." Job 2:11-13

They sat in silence with Job for seven days. They observed the outward signs of mourning prevalent in the east, by tearing their clothing and sprinkling dust upon their heads as a sign of grief. However, they extended to their friend no words of comfort or sympathy, no gestures of warmth or affection. When Job poured out his heart full of misery, Eliphaz was first to answer, but not in consolation:

"Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands.

Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees.

But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled." Job 4: 3-5

It is obvious from Eliphaz's scornful words, that when others found themselves in trying circumstances, Job had come alongside, to offer help and comfort in the spirit of being his brother's keeper.

However, the same compassion was not extended to him. Instead it was surmised he must have sinned or behaved wickedly in order to bring this calamity upon himself:

"Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, thy hope, and the uprightness of thy ways?

Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off? Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same."

Job 4: 6-8

Their "comfort" only added to Job's burden, causing him to label them "miserable comforters":

" I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all.

I also could speak as ye do: if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you.

But I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief.

But now he hath made me weary: thou hast made desolate all my company." Job 16:2,3-5,7

A strengthening of spirit could have been afforded Job, as well as the one extending comfort. However, lacking their help, Job sought out the lessons intended from his experience for his spiritual betterment:

"Mine eye also is dim by reason of sorrow, and all my members are as a shadow.

Upright men shall be astonished at this, and the innocent shall stir up himself against the hypocrite.

The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." Job 17: 7-9

How well these "clean hands" speak of the endeavor to cut off the thinking of the flesh and grow more spiritually pleasing to the Father. This word "clean" means to purify or purge and comes from a prime root, "to brighten". This brightness or cleanliness that Job speaks of, is only possible as the flesh is denied, thus rendering it weaker, and enabling the spirit to grow. During these dark circumstances, Job was tempted by his own wife to curse God and die, but refused, recognizing that there could be spiritual gain from this dreadful trial. By doing so, he grew in perception, learning to lean upon the Almighty and not trust in his own strength, and by remaining faithful throughout, proved the integrity of his heart:

"So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.

He had also seven sons and three daughters.

After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.

So Job died, being old and full of days." Job 42:12-13,16-17

How many in the Scriptures, brought low by trying circumstances as Job, were strengthened, as their hearts were cleansed through adverse experiences. David comes to mind as he wrote these poignant words after his failure with Bathsheba:

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

Psalm 51:1-3,7,10

This too was the mind of Job, and must be ours if we desire to grow spiritually, going from strength to strength, especially when we are made weak or brought low by our circumstances. With spiritual perception gained, Job was better able to feel the cleansing process working within him, and when confronted with his own uncleanness, turned from it in repentance, mourning for his lack, with "dust and ashes".

"Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

I have heard of thee by the hearing' of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.

Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Job 42: 3-6

David wrote further in the Psalms, explaining how this cleansing process is to work during trying circumstances:

"Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them.

Who passing through the valley of Baca (tears or weeping) make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God."

Psalm 84:5-7

David was explaining how important it is for those who find themselves in the "valley of Baca" or a place of tears, not to become mired in self-pity or depression because of their present trial. In faith they must turn that difficult circumstance into a time of inward inspection and spiritual growth, to be helped and strengthened in their journey Zionward. How can this be done? By intently focusing upon the ultimate hope extended by God to those who endure to the end as, David wrote:

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." Psalm 24:3-5

Our hope Brethren and Sisters is to be found among those who have been washed clean from the flesh's filthiness and are granted in God's mercy, to be adorned in white robes. At times of trial, illness or personal sorrow, that goal may seem to move further from our grasp, especially when our own flesh natures urge us to give in, as did Job's wife. Let us be encouraged by the faithful examples of Job and David - both experienced loss, sorrow and affliction, but who never wavered in their desire to walk in the paths of Truth, turning the tears of trial and tribulation into deep wells of spiritual growth, refreshment and strength. M.C.S.

"Transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ"

(2 Cor. 11:13)

Even at the time of the Apostle Paul there were those who broke away to set up organisations and "churches" which they ran for their own benefit and to indulge their personal pride.

The Apostle John wrote of one "who loveth to have the preeminence." Exhorting against the work of such, John went on to say, "Beloved, follow not that which is evil." (3 John).

How much more is there a proliferation of sects and societies in these times. "Movements" began to grow apace with American preachers of the eighteenth century, such as Jonathan Edwards. And their work came to be described as the "Great Awakening", and this has gone on ever since. Camp-fire meetings involving many thousands became a familiar feature in the United States.

Later this so-called revivalism moved to England with campaigns which ran from Moody and Sankey to Billy Graham.

But there had been a form of revivalism in England previously, in the person of George Whitfield who after handing over his Bristol open-air congregation to John Wesley, set sail for America in 1759. Soon he was being listened to by vast audiences in Philadelphia, where he attracted the interest of Benjamin Franklin. Whitfield particularly sought out the Negro population, and his efforts made a considerable impact. Jonathan Edwards was also at work at the same time. From their preachings arose Pentecostalism; and black Pentecostalists who lose themselves in a trance of music and dancing. So, in a way, though revivalism returned to England, some of the seeds of it had previously come from there; ecstatic music being one of the features. Stirring words, rousing tunes and strong emotional experiences had been an early feature of the Methodists of John Wesley; and his brother Charles had been the composer of many hymns.

The proliferation of small religious groups is now greater than ever. The United States is dotted with them, and unlike earlier times they do not represent merely the impoverished and underclasses of the population. This situation is helped by the American Constitution which forbids any national establishment of religion. But extreme views have emerged amongst these diverse religions, many of them referred to as "house churches" operating in school halls or in members' homes. One group is found to dictate which clothing colours are acceptable; these emphasise that wearing black is a symptom of "possession"! Some incorporate bizarre exorcism rituals in their services. A recent report in the National Press speaks of a so-called phenomenon emanating from Canada and California from certain evangelical churches. These have said they are experiencing a fulfilment of the prophecy of Psalm 81:10 "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." Worshippers, it is claimed, have had their amalgam tooth fillings turned to gold during prayer! It is said to be the latest manifestation of the "Toronto Blessing" previously experienced when worshippers fell down laughing and barking in various gatherings in 1995. In England various evangelical meetings in Wimbledon, Bath, and Croydon are said to have been affected. One church, with a 300 congregation identified as Croydon's Folly's End Christian Fellowship, allegedly had its lady administrator blessed

with gold dust on her hands and chest, and around the eyes. In Canada, the Toronto Airport Church, insists these miracles are true! Some dentists, however, have bravely declared that their records show that they had themselves put gold in the fillings of these evangelists. But think how extreme and fanatical such movements are going, when cultists and religious eccentrics are heading for Jerusalem for the start of the millennium. One of these is a 67 year-old handyman from San Francisco. God, he says, called him Elijah in 1981, and told him to go to Jerusalem. The reporter who visited him in Israel, was told, "Here you are!" "Don't you realise? I didn't look for you. You found me. That's no coincidence. It's a miracle!" He went on to assert that "the illuminati masons, the ones (the President) is behind, the New World Order - they tried to kill me" "They are getting worse, they're getting stronger, and that's why the Jews must leave America, because there's not much time left, they are going to close the borders, and when they (the Jews) can't get out its going to be worse than the Holocaust." He says he has had visions of the Antichrist hovering over a benighted Europe and of America thrown down by a mighty earthquake. This professed Elijah walks up and down the streets of Jerusalem carrying a case upon which is printed in red "Prophet Elijah". Inside he carries copies of the Ten Commandments, and a number of his own scribbled prophecies.

Israel has found it necessary to deport some of these so-called pilgrims. Members of a Denver-based sect called "Concerned Christians" was found to be planning certain "extreme acts" in Jerusalem, in the hope of "bringing Jesus back to life!" One church, having a presence on the Mount of Olives, belongs to the Seventh Day Adventists. Its leader comes from Brooklyn, and he has a congregation of about 30 people. What is not always realised, is that the Seventh Day Adventists followed the work of a certain William Miller who persuaded thousands of followers to sell their possessions and leave their places of employment to move to upstate New York to await the soon return of Christ. This was in the 1840's, which those followers afterwards called "The Great Disappointment". This leader of the church on the Mount of Olives, using a mathematical formulae that his religion uses to interpret scripture, predicts that Christ will return during Passover next year. Another, from south east London, says he came to Jerusalem after

randomly opening his Bible, and the first thing he read told him to go to Israel. Calling himself an "End Timer", he declares AD 2030 is the important date, because Jesus was crucified in AD 30, which is the key date.

Yet another Pentecostal from Mississippi, has been planning to transfer a number of Red Angus cattle to Israel. The reason is to fulfil a command in the law of Moses, (Numbers 19:2) "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot." It is hoped that one of these transported cattle will produce a red heifer to purify the site of the "third temple" to be constructed on the Temple Mount in the Final Days. Six "John the Baptists" have also been discovered in the desert in the Jerusalem area!

What a situation it all is! These extraordinary ideas and testimonies undoubtedly cannot be reconciled with Bible Truth. It is a fulfilment of what Jesus pronounced, when He declared:-

"... MANY shall come in my name ... saying ... the time draweth near: go ye not ... after them." (Luke 21:8)

The stand of the Apostle Paul is the example for us, who:-
"(had) renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the TRUTH commending ourselves ..."
(2 Corinthians 4:2)

THE LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD A TYPE OF CHRIST AND HIS DISCIPLES (DR. J. THOMAS - 1835)

The High Priest came by blood, water and oil.

Jesus came by blood, water and Spirit, as High Priest.

The High Priest made atonement by blood of animals for the sins of Israel.

So did Jesus by His own blood, once for all, for the sins of the true Israel of God.

The High Priest alone could enter into the Most Holy Place, which was within the veil.

Jesus alone has entered within the veil into the Most Holy or second heavenly place, not yet laid open to view.

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The High Priest and the common priests alone, could enter the Holy Place, they alone could offer sacrifices of incense, etc. there.

Jesus and His disciples can alone enter the Christian Church; they alone can offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.

The priests ate the shewbread, or bread of the presence every week, and burned incense, etc. by the light of the seven-branched lamp, shining in the otherwise dark, Holy Place.

The true disciples eat the loaf or bread of the presence every week, and offer prayers, by the light of the Holy Spirit shining through the Written Word.

A BIBLE CLASS

"Turned Aside Unto Vain Jangling"

(I Timothy 1:6)

Paul's letter to Timothy, his son in the faith, (I Timothy chapter one), is full of encouragement to continue in the ministry of Jesus Christ, but also a warning to beware of those who may try to turn others from the purity of the Truth. The apostle had a great love for Timothy and faith in his abilities, and though only a young man, he had been left behind to continue the work started by Paul in Ephesus:

"Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine.

Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."

I Timothy 1:2-4

Paul described himself as being, "before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious" until his conversion on the way to Damascus, and so knew first hand the misplaced zeal of some who may try to cause injury to the Truth and its followers. Some were also known to substitute their own carnal thinking - "fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly

edifying" (vs 4), thus adulterating the purity of the Truth.

In our verse under consideration, Paul describes those who have left the simplicity of faith in the Truth, turning aside to embrace false doctrines contrived from fleshly reasoning and thinking. Of these he warns Timothy:

"From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling.

Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." I Timothy 1: 6-7

To "swerve" comes from two words - "not" and "aim", giving the thought of missing the mark - to turn either to the right or left, out of the straight and narrow way. The thought of "jangling" is described in the Dictionary as "an unharmonious sound" - much like the sound of an instrument out of tune. This description makes us think of Paul's letter to the Corinthians:

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity (love), I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." I Corinthians 13:1

This is the same "vain jangling" of which Paul warned Timothy. To preach the gospel either in a foreign "tongue" or in a manner not clearly comprehended by the hearers, gives no spiritual edification for it cannot be understood. The glory of the word, seen in the hope of salvation it contains, is lost - leaving only the speaker glorying in his own oratorical skills, unmindful that his message has fallen upon deaf ears and is jangling, or out of tune, because he is not serving God, but self.

We know from the history of God's Truth, that men have endeavored to adulterate His word by inserting their own interpretations and fleshly thinking, much as the Scribes and Pharisees had done in revering their man-made traditions over the simplicity of love and mercy seen in the spirit of the law. As those with such thinking were endeavoring to teach the gospel at Ephesus, we can understand Paul's concern and warning to Timothy.

Timothy may have been a young man when beginning his ministry, and when confronted with elders who endeavored to promote these false teachings, he may have been hesitant to confront and refute their wrong thinking, for further in this letter, Paul encourages:

“These things command and teach.

Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.”

I Timothy 4:11-12,16

In the same spirit, how often the Lord Jesus had rebuked the Scribes, Pharisees and elders who should have been teachers of the law but who had swerved aside to follow their own thinking - replacing the spirit of love and mercy in the law with the traditions of men.

The chronology gives the time of Paul’s letter to Timothy as A.D.65 - approximately thirty years after the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Many had heard and believed His testimony and the witnessing of the disciples and apostles like Paul. These after baptism into His name, had come together to form ecclesias of “those called out”, brethren and sisters endeavoring to walk after His example in obedience to the word. But here were some in these newly founded ecclesias introducing, “fables and endless genealogies”, which did not build up the body in faith but created discord and argument, and adulteration of the purity of the truth.

When the law was in effect, genealogies were not only important but essential. The high priest must prove his lineage back to the house of Aaron in order to serve. But with the death of the Lord Jesus, the law and the office of high priest were set aside on earth, and this honor placed upon Christ as the High Priest and the one Mediator between God and His people. The need for proof of lineage or genealogy was now of no importance, for the law had been fulfilled and done away. If some were now endeavoring to resurrect this practise, they had lost sight of the fulfillment made by Christ’s sacrifice and death and were in spiritual peril through their lack of faith and perception.

At the end of his letter, Paul’s final words again remind Timothy of the importance of keeping the integrity of the gospel message committed to his trust, and to beware of those not adhering to this faith in that same unity of mind and spirit:

“O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust,

avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

Which some professing have erred concerning the faith.

Grace be with thee Amen."

I Timothy 6:20-21

This departure from Truth, described in Paul's letter to Timothy was, as we know from history, only the beginning. Today the assorted assemblies in Christendom that claim to believe and follow after the Lord Jesus, number into the hundreds, all considering themselves to be His people, yet differing widely in walk and belief. What a sad commentary this makes on man's ability to deceive himself that he is walking in the purity of the one faith, when in truth, by introducing doctrine not in accordance with God's word, but rather the "commandments of men, that turn from the truth" (Titus 1:14) man has swerved out or missed the mark concerning the straight and narrow way and "turned aside unto vain jangling" M.C.S.

TWO OR THREE

Jesus gave the following assuring words to those of His little flock:

"For where two or three are gathered together, in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

(Matthew 18:20)

Looking back to Dr. J. Thomas's visit to Britain, 1869/1870, it is interesting to find the following account by his daughter, of her and her father's visit to Paisley, Scotland :-

"Having completed our week's stay in Paisley, we proceeded on Friday, February 11th. to the next place on the route-Beith, a small town about twelve miles west of Paisley. A short ride of three-quarters of an hour, by rail, brought us there. We were received by brother Gillies, at whose house we made our home while in Beith. We found three brethren and one sister here. They meet together regularly in the Mason's Hall, for worship and mutual edification. Brother Gillies has been bearing testimony in behalf of the truth for some time past, by means of short articles published in a local paper weekly; and a discourse

every Sunday, to which, however, the public have hitherto turned a deaf ear. This offers no encouragement to continue such efforts, but patient perseverance in the service of the truth brings its own reward in the profit arising from the study of the word, but above all, in the consciousness of devoting one's energies to God, who rightfully claims the first and dominant place in all our thoughts, and all our undertakings."

This account underlines that the work of the Truth, some 130 years ago, was done courageously by a few in number, in conformity with the declaration of the prophet :-

"For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice - - -" (Zechariah 4:10)

Dr. Thomas and his daughter certainly did not despise those few at Beith, being quite content to make their abode with them while Dr. Thomas endeavoured to help them with the work. It is an example and an exhortation to us.

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

"And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him - - -" (Daniel 11:40)

The involvement of N.A.T.O. and particularly the United States and Britain in the affairs of Serbia is very significant. It prompts the question, "Why are they doing it?" The Kosovo Liberation Army in the territory of former Yugoslavia, has for some time been provoking the dominant Serbian entity in what remains of the Yugoslavian territory. The cruel response eventually has been a whirlwind of reaction against those who have sown to the wind. But where have the arms for the K.L.A. come from? The suffering however for the displaced people of this civil war conflict has been extreme. But the Serbs also have suffered through the N.A.T.O. air operations against them, with important bridges destroyed as well as military targets, in the endeavour to bomb the Serbs into submitting to a Western solution.

At the time of writing the Western Governments are hoping there will soon be a conclusion to their intervention, but this remains to be seen. There are deep-seated painful memories of past atrocities. The Serbs settled in the Balkans in the 7th Century and were united as one kingdom about 1169. This covered most of the Balkans by about 1350. But the Turks took over when the Serbs were defeated in Kosovo in 1389; Serbia being annexed by the Ottoman power in 1459. Uprisings in 1804 to 1816 led to the Turks recognising Serbia as an autonomous principality. But then as a result of Serbia's war with Turkey (1876-78) Serbia became an independent kingdom. This was enlarged after the two Balkan Wars of 1912-1913. During World War 2, Germany set up a puppet government in Serbia, and ninety-four per cent of Serbian Jews were eliminated between 1941-1944, but the Serbian population also suffered. But with the conclusion of the 2nd World War the Yugoslav Federal People's Republic was formed with Serbia as an important part. But by 1971 the Croatians were showing unrest, wanting a separate identity. Nevertheless Yugoslavia held together until the death of the leader Marshal Tito in 1980. He had led the unified country since 1945, but unfortunately for the Balkans, there was no one to take his place. A year after his death there were demonstrations by ethnic Albanians in South Serbia (Kosovo) wanting full republic status from Serbia. The army suppressed the turmoil. This is the history which has led to the present bloodshed and suffering, and this is what Britain and the United States and N.A.T.O. are meddling with. Albanians are non-Slavic, and are largely Muslim in religion; just the opposite to Serbs who are Orthodox. N.A.T.O. hopes to get the Kosovo Albanians back into South Serbia without the use of ground troops, hoping thereafter there will be a settling down and lessening of ethnic hostilities, with Serbs swallowing their bitterness at what has happened to them recently, and also in the past. It does seem to be wishful thinking. Where is the diplomacy in such a situation?

A Political Commentator has made the following comments:

"Imagine you are a black Briton. Listen in your imagination, to our Foreign Secretary explaining that Albanians in Kosovo are "OUR" concern in a way in which Africans

in Sierra Leone (where similar suffering is taking place) are not. Listen (to another politician) on the radio --- telling a caller that though we sell arms to Indonesia we cannot intervene in East Timor (another area of ethnic cleansing) because that was not "our Continent". --- The death has occurred of One World, also known as The Brotherhood of Man. One World passed away unnoticed in the night (a reference to the differences' of policies, depending upon which ethnic peoples are in trouble). One World will be missed by --- the Sixties generation brought up to believe in the equality of the races, the common humanity of the peoples of every continent and the indivisibility of our rights and duties towards one another. Harold Macmillan (former British Prime Minister) had spoken of the wind of change. Imperialism and paternalism would yield to brotherhood and equality, progress would be colour blind. Swords would be beaten into ploughshares and colonial palaces converted into British Council libraries. All would be world citizens. --- Now comes the generation that never owned (territorial possession) and doesn't care. Why should they? Those not of "our continent" are not our race, our people, putative friends or foes to our European Union. Unlike the Balkans. ---

The Balkans may soon be very much ours. --- we will have to guarantee Kosovan territory indefinitely, and perhaps help to run it too --- almost un-noticed, small pockets, havens, and mini-states are beginning to fleck the Continent and beyond, and they share some of the characteristics of the old imperial protectorate. Bosnia, the Kurdish safe havens and the Iraqi no-fly zone are a start. We have been stuck in Cyprus for years, and will remain so. Kosovo may follow as a fully fledged protectorate. When the "nascent democracies" spawned by the collapse of the Soviet Union join the European Union, they will not join as proud sovereign states, but almost as refugees, their entire economies dependent upon the terms we accord to them. Who

knows, the whole of the Balkans may in time need to be "guaranteed" and policed. Certainly it will have to be rebuilt. These operations do not come without cost and with peace will arrive the argument that those who uphold the peace should derive some revenue from their dependent beneficiaries. And so would be born a successor to Empire, all of it white, and under-pinned by the military support of the biggest white former colony in the world. --- Some fifty years after the death of Empire comes --- a stockade of the former imperialists, tightly centred on one region and one race. The Brotherhood of Man was only a daydream in between."

Cynical remarks perhaps. But this viewpoint largely sums up the present situation.

To those who look to the Word of God for guidance, what is taking place is according to His divine plan. There IS a king of the south and this king is "pushing". And the king of the north does not like it. Russia has appealed to N.A.T.O. not to "seize Yugoslavia and make it their protectorate". Across Russia there is resentment that N.A.T.O. has become militarily engaged against a sovereign state, which Russia has had affinity with over many years. So Kosovo has brought, or is bringing about, a determination between East and West, which previously had been hoped would never take place again after the demise of Communism. And though not yet on a large military scale, it is nevertheless significant that Russia has specially sent at this time some of its ships to the Mediterranean for reconnaissance purposes.

Truly scripture is being fulfilled, with powers acting undiplomatically, and thereby causing circumstances that will bring about the end of these times.

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

**HAMBURG, NEW YORK, Corner Southwestern Blvd.
and Pleasant Ave.**

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m.

Sunday Afternoon Class 1.45 p.m.

Midweek: Bible Class: Forestville, Hamburg and Fredonia

Every Third Week: Revelation Study

In response to our invitations to Christadelphians, many requests to be put on our Remnant magazine mailing list have been received. Perhaps some are concerned. We are grateful for this interest and encouragement. The invitations will continue to be sent through the next two months, God willing.

J.A.DeF.

MANCHESTER, *Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.*

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.00 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 7.15 p.m.

We continue to be occupied with the problems of several with whom we are in contact. Though not in the same category as witnessing to The Truth, it is nevertheless a part of the work, and we are grateful for the prayers of those united with us, for our strengthening and for our guiding in these endeavours.