

DECEMBER 1976

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 ye be not deceived"

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

CHRISTENDOM – AND OTHERS – ASTRAY

AS THE GIRDLE CLEAVETH TO THE LOINS OF A MAN

BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL

THE SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

All Communications

W. V. Butterfield
16 Westfield Road,
Cheadle Hulme,
Cheadle,
Cheadle, SK8 6EH

J. A. DeFries
R.D.1. Forestville,
New York 14062
U.S.A.

At the Table of the Lord

“The Lord seeth not as man seeth”

In our daily portion in I Samuel, we are reading of a time of trouble in Israel. They had demanded a king, rejecting God who ruled over them — His Kingdom on earth. Saul had been anointed their king, but soon proved unfaithful, failing to obey God, following instead the thoughts of his own heart. He spared Agag, the king of the Amalekites, and the best of the sheep, oxen, and all that was good, using the flesh’s reasoning that these animals were saved to offer to the Lord: this, in spite of God’s specific instructions to utterly destroy all that pertained to the Amalekites. Samuel quickly showed Saul how wrong his thinking was:

“... Hath the *Lord* as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the *Lord*? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” (I Samuel 15:22)

How easy it is to find all kinds of reasons to do what the flesh wants rather than obey the voice of the Lord. We all feel this pull of the flesh; are all tempted to serve our own desires; and sometimes succumb rather than to hearken to the voice of the Lord.

Yet, how greatly helped we are, brethren and sisters, if our striving is sincere, to obey His voice. It is clearly shown to us that He alone knows what is best, and quickly reveals it to us. As an example, we read of the prophet’s going to Bethlehem at the command of God to anoint another king over Israel in Saul’s place. God’s instruction was (I Samuel 16:1):

“... How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.”

Samuel had continued to grieve for Saul — a natural reaction. Perhaps, it can help us as we enter into Samuel’s struggle. He knew Saul had been rejected of God from being king over Israel because of disobedience; yet, he continued to mourn. He knew another would be anointed in Saul’s place, knew it was God’s purpose, God’s justice that this should be so. Yet, he mourned. Was it again the flesh’s reaction? How difficult we find it, brethren and sisters, not to mourn — even when we know what God has done is just and right. God reminded Samuel, gently but firmly, “How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him?” just as He reminds us,

lest we be overcome by the reasoning of the flesh, by the emotions that rule it.

Samuel feared to go to Bethlehem, lest when the king heard of it, he would kill Samuel. Was this again the reasoning of the flesh, a natural reaction we all experience? God commanded Samuel to go, and said:

“. . . and I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee.” (verse 3)

In obedience, Samuel went to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem, seeking the one who was to be anointed king of Israel. We know what happened: Samuel saw Eliab, the eldest son of Jesse, who was a man tall in stature and good to look upon; and quickly judged, saying:

“. . . Surely the *Lord's* anointed is before him.”

This was a natural conclusion by Samuel, for here was the firstborn of Jesse of whose house God had said one would be chosen. Samuel looked upon Eliab and came to a quick conclusion, but not a right one, as he was shown. Did he take things into his own hands, failing to wait for God who had told him:

“. . . I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and thou shalt anoint unto me *him whom I name unto thee.*” (verse 3)

Had God shown Samuel? Had God named Eliab? Can we discern, brethren and sisters, how important it is, having done all that we *can* do, to wait on the Lord for what He has promised?

Going back to I Samuel 9:2, we remember that Saul, too, was:

“. . . a choice young man, and a goodly: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he.”

He *was* good to look on; yet, when tested, failed to obey the voice of the Lord. Eliab also was good to look on, and Samuel felt he was the Lord's anointed, failing to have learned from the experience with Saul. However, God was with Samuel, and revealed to him his failure:

“. . . Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because *I have refused him*: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.” (I Samuel 16:7)

How much help there is here for us, even as there was for Samuel: a reminder that we cannot discern the heart, but must trust, and turn to the One who can. How easy and natural it is to look on the outward appearance, and come to a conclusion as did Samuel. Yet, we are shown that such conclusions can be wrong, that we must look to God who *will* reveal, taking away any uncertainty or doubt. Do we

always realise the extent of this blessing, and make use of it? Samuel failed to do so, motivated, no doubt, by eagerness and zeal, but, nevertheless, misdirected.

“My Thoughts are not your thoughts”

Again we are shown that, if we rely on ourselves, failure is often the result. In Isaiah 55:8 we read:

“... my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.”

We must come to recognise this, and through this awareness try to bring our thoughts, our ways into conformance with His. We know from experience this is not easy, for we like to have our own way. However, if we can more fully recognise that our ways are not His, won't we be slow to make a decisive move on our own, more ready to wait for Him to reveal His ways, less inclined to look on the outward appearance, anxious to wait on the One who can discern the heart?

Jesus helps in this struggle:

“Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.” (John 7:24)

Who alone can judge righteous judgment? We know that it is God and Jesus who now sits at His right hand.

If we had lived in the time of Jesus and looked upon the scribes and Pharisees, they would outwardly appear righteous and zealous; yet, let us listen to the words of the Spirit:

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.”

(Matthew 23:27-28)

Jesus could look into their hearts, shown by the Spirit what they were really like. We, too, can be shown, brethren and sisters, as long as we are ready to wait upon Him.

“Circumcision is that of the heart”

Much help is given if we are trying to discern what is required. We remember Paul's teaching:

“For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” (Romans 2:28-29)

Eliab, Jesse's firstborn, had praise of men. He had the outward appearance of a suitable one, to be choice over Israel; but what were God's words concerning him? "... I have *refused* him..." "*Refuse*," we find, means "to abhor," "cast away," "contemn," "despise." It is a strong word, showing God's mind concerning Eliab's spirit. He knew there was evil in that heart, and it is exposed for us in I Samuel 17:28. As David went up to the camp of Israel, Eliab's anger was kindled against his younger brother, and he said, "... I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart..." This was the flesh speaking, probably in envy at David's position; it was a heart not circumcised in spirit, but rather giving vent to the flesh's emotions. Indeed, God *does* look on the heart. We must be aware always, brethren and sisters, that He continually looks on *our* hearts. What does He see? Is He pleased with what He finds, as He was with David who was the last of Jesse's sons to appear before Samuel? Indeed, David had been assigned the work of looking after the sheep; probably his father and his brethren had not even considered him as a possibility of being anointed king. Yet, when David was brought before Samuel, God said:

"... Arise, anoint him: for this is he." (I Samuel 16:12)

Are we glad, brethren and sisters, that God can and does look on the heart, looking beyond the outward appearance? Does it at times make us fear and tremble; for we know what is in our hearts. Sometimes we are not pleased by what we know is there, and so we can be sure that our Father will not be. Does this make us strive harder to put away the outward man, and seek to nourish the inner man, the man of the heart? Paul reminds us in II Corinthians 4:7:

"... we have this treasure (the Truth) in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

Earthen vessels are not always beautiful, as is brass, silver or gold. The outward appearance is not great nor important. Paul continues, verse 16:

"... though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

How needful we find this is, brethren and sisters, that the inward man *is* renewed day by day. How is it possible to be renewed daily? We have recently read Jesus' words in response to His disciples' entreaty to teach them to pray:

"Give us day by day our daily bread." (Luke 11:3)

He was referring not simply to the natural food we need in order to live, but the spiritual food which we so badly need to nourish that inward man, the inner man which must have been so apparent to the Lord in David, causing Him to tell Samuel: "Arise, anoint him: for this is he."

It is our fervent prayer that one day Jesus will look on us and rejoice at what He sees in the inner man, and that we may hear the longed-for words:

“... Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

(Matthew 25:34)

What a hope to have; what an exalted calling! Shall we know that joy and relief, that rest from the constant struggle when, indeed, our thoughts *may* be as our Father's thoughts, and our ways as His?

J.A.De F.

Christendom—and Others—Astray

The Spirit of the Law the Spirit of Christ.

“My Covenant.”

“I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant . . . which they made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof.” (Jeremiah 34:18)

For mortals to be permitted to make a covenant with the Almighty is almost incomprehensibly wonderful. Covenants or treaties between nations are accompanied with great display. Photographs of the respective leaders signing the necessary documents appear in the press of the world. This happened, for instance, when in August 1939 Russia made a covenant or treaty with Germany, behind the backs of the Western allies. Peace was to be guaranteed between the two nations for twenty years. (In fact it only lasted some twenty months when Germany invaded Russia.) Ribbentrop, the haughty and arrogant Foreign Secretary of Germany, and Stalin were in the limelight. Powerful world figures, causing fear in many hearts. But what happened to them in a few years? Ribbentrop was hanged after his trial for war crimes; Stalin died. For a while he was eulogised. Embalmed and placed alongside Lenin in the Red Square Mausoleum. Before long his crimes were made public. Demoted from his honoured position, he was placed in a common grave. “Man that is in honour, and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish.” How important *the covenant* which gives promise of life and true glory in the Kingdom which will never end.

The *covenant* is the heart of the Law. By it the children of God were taught of His goodness inducing a true love of the Creator; and how they might live in peace and security by loving one's neighbour.

Children of God are made of flesh like the rest of mankind. They can fail to appreciate the covenant, and do fail. Continual failure

brings about the abrogation of the covenant, with all the blessings promised for the present life and the eternal future. This is what had happened to God's people by the time of the prophet Jeremiah. From the King Zedekiah downwards, the *covenant* was despised.

The Law, the *covenant* into which they had entered required them to free their servants at the appointed time. This, they had failed to do. Rebuke brought a return to the Law; but not for long.

“And ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye made a *covenant* before me in the house which is called by my name: But ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant . . . whom ye had set at liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants.” (Jeremiah 34:15-16)

It is a dreadful thing to *pollute* the name of God, nor can it go unpunished. Punished as we see from the record with horrifying vengeance.

“Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the Lord, (note the irony) to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you to be removed into all the Kingdoms of the earth.”
(Jeremiah 34:17)

When the sufferings of the Jews are considered at the time of the captivity by Nebuchadnezza, and later in their removal “into all kingdoms of the earth,” the mind is helped to appreciate the holiness of the *covenant*, and the view of the Almighty when this is despised. A well known truth, which needs to be emphasised, is that the *diaspora* — the worldwide scattered Jews — with the fear and insecurity involved, is a result of disregarding of the *covenant* made originally with God.

The condemnation is emphasised in somewhat enigmatical words:

“And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, *when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof*. . . . I will even give them into the hand of their enemies. . . .” (Jeremiah 34:18-20)

When was the calf cut in twain? When did they pass between the parts thereof? An outward sign of a holy covenant?

The Covenant.

Sanctified “when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof.”

It would be foolish to suppose because we might not know the reference to which the prophet made, that his brethren were unaware of what was meant. They must have known, otherwise the words would not have been uttered. God never gives instruction which cannot be understood by the seeker after truth.

Christendom neither knows nor cares about *the* covenant. They make through their leaders, elaborate and high sounding pronouncements, which they keep only when it suits them, and break when it does not. The history of their councils, their synods, is one of broken tenets, and reference to any covenant is completely lacking. Why? Because "God is not in all their thoughts". Further proof is not needed that Christendom in spite of its learning, of its numerous devotees, of its imposing buildings and ornaments, is hopelessly astray.

It might be supposed that Christendom has arisen without having originally any roots in the Truth. Such is not the case as Jesus expounds in the Revelation. He shows that departure from His teaching, which is the Truth, can be very subtil, but eventually assumes an unbelievable magnitude, great and sufficiently imposing to "deceive the whole world". What a grave warning is contained in this revelation!

There is no doubt that the "*others*" once had the Truth, based on a reverence for the "*covenant*". Now like Christendom they have despised the covenant, by no longer expunging error from their midst. They make the same plea as Christendom, that rather than "purge out the leaven" it is better to stay with the community and fight the error within, in the vain hope that the Truth by this means will be preserved. Present-day Christendom is an overwhelming answer to the futility of such ungodly action, such failure to deal with error which is like leaven, and unless it is purged out will leaven or corrupt the whole. This is what has happened in Christendom, and again in those who once had the Truth in the latter days — the "*others*".

The Jews descended from Abraham, are regarded by God as part of him, and that is why he is spoken of as their "father", as indeed he is the "father" of those who are Jews "inwardly", of ourselves. The close association between the Jews and Abraham is spoken of by the Apostle:

"And as I may so say, Levi also, who received tithes, *payed tithes in Abraham.*" (Hebrews 7:9)

If we can receive this then what was done by Abraham when the *covenant* was made, included his descendants, the Jews. So may we look at the time when a *covenant* was made with Abraham, which, it is hoped will explain the words uttered by Jeremiah to his brethren.

God promised Abraham the land, when Abraham said:

“Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?”

(Genesis 15:8)

Abraham was told what he must do so that in what followed he might be assured that God’s promise would be fulfilled: that he would inherit the land for ever, a glorious salvation.

He was to take three animals and two birds. The animals offered were:

An heifer three years old.

A she goat.

A Ram.

A turtledove and a young pigeon.

The animals which had a special significance were to be divided, and “laid each piece one against another”. Here was no meaningless ritual. The Law given later, which was in operation from the beginning as far as was applicable, showed that:

The heifer (or calf) was used as a sin offering.

The she goat: a peace offering.

The Ram: a trespass offering.

The dove and pigeon: a burnt and sin offering.

In these offerings, accepted by the Almighty as a sweet savour, was represented the Body of Christ; for only by an acceptable offering could humans become a “sweet savour” to God.

What followed is most significant.

“When the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abraham drove them away.” (Genesis 15:11)

In a figure the body of believers was preserved from the “biting and devouring” by the unremitting efforts of Abraham — the father of the faithful.

It is pertinent to consider ourselves, and our experience at this time. Do we really belong to our father Abraham, protecting continuously the Body from the birds of prey? Experience shows that frequently these arise from within. We have witnessed to our sorrow those who have preyed upon the Body by their questions and implied criticisms accompanied by an attitude of piety, which was no more than a sham. One such case comes to mind where the individual, whose duty it was to send out magazines, refused to send magazines to those withdrawn from to confirm to them what the Ecclesia had done. “Her conscience would not let her.” Efforts were made to show there was no such thing in the Truth as a “private conscience” for all must be joined together in “the same mind and judgment”. Oh! how the pious can make wrong seem right. They are by their

continual fault-finding devourers of the Body, birds of prey. Let the great and continual efforts of Abraham instruct us. He “drove them away.”

Then when darkness fell,

“Behold a smoking furnace, a burning lamp passed between the pieces.” (Genesis 15:17)

Significantly the Spirit seen in the “smoking furnace” and the “lamp”, showed that God accepted the offering; the Body preserved by Abraham. Abraham was with the Spirit in this work. He was in a figure part of the “furnace” and “lamp” He saw this manifestation. He embraced it. In this sense he was part of it.

He was rewarded for this faithfulness with the divine assurance:

“In the same day the Lord made a *covenant* with Abraham, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land.” (Genesis 15:18)

When Jeremiah rebuked his brethren for their despising of the *covenant*, he could with all this in mind say

“I will give the men that have transgressed my *covenant*, which have not performed the words of the *covenant* which they had made before me, when they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof.

I will give them into the hand of their enemies”

(Jeremiah 34:18-20)

Sad it is, that those who once had *the Truth* — the “*Others*” — no longer acknowledge Abraham as their “father”; which is seen in their ignorance and neglect of the *covenant* they are supposed to uphold. Maybe some of these may yet be stirred, as others have, to consider they no longer belong to Abraham; they indeed no longer belong to God any more than the sects of Christendom. Correspondence from the troubled and perplexed is invited.

(to be continued)

“As the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man.”

In Jeremiah ch. 13 verse 11 we are reminded of the product, for which we are being shaped, and a general reminder of how we can successfully arrive at that result for which God and His Son are aiming and working with us:—

“For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to *cleave* unto me the whole house of Israel . . . saith the Lord; *that* they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear.” (Jeremiah 13:11)

So the end which God has in mind for us — even in this life — the aim for which He has called us, is that we should be a people, manifestly and genuinely bearing the Name of God. Also that our lives should be a praise to Him; which means contentment with His paths rather than a feeling that we are dreadfully put out by serving Him, and hope He realises how much we are doing for Him. This would not be a praise to God, or fulfil the last objective, which is that we should be for “A glory”. May we consider for a moment how we can fulfil these requirements.

In the first place verse 11, to which we have just referred, gives us a very good lead where it says “I have caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel”, in order that we might be a people, a praise and a glory, by cleaving to God *as a girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man*. So it appears that this cleaving to God is a general pre-requisite to fulfilling His desire that we should be a glory. We know that if a girdle is to be effective, it is right close and encompassing the one to whom the girdle belongs. A girdle is not doing any good if it is dragging yards behind along the ground, and blown this way and that by the wind. No more will we be fulfilling our purpose if we are dragging our feet along, and blown this way and that by various ungodly influences. So this cleaving to God, whatever it means, is the great thing for us to cultivate. It can be greatly enhanced by our being in a strait — a time of trouble or difficulty — in fact this could be the very reason why a difficulty is sent. We can see the absolute reliance of David upon God, when undergoing a time of great stress under the persecution of Saul.

The Example of David.

In I Samuel 23:4 for instance:

“Then David enquired of the Lord yet again. And the Lord answered him and said, Arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand.”

One of the great features seen here is that David received an answer to his requests; the infallible guidance that he, and we all need. This answer of God was dependent upon David's pureness of heart. If there were something wrong, neither David, nor Saul, nor any of us would have the guidance we sought. We remember how Saul tried to live a double life, following God up to a point, but not forgetting to please himself at other times. This, of course, was not like the girdle that holds fast round a man, nor was it the way God wanted Saul, and all of us, to cleave to Him. Are we not getting a picture that cleaving unto God is with singleness of heart, all the time: not just when it suits us; but not if it does not suit. That would only be like the girdle that had nearly fallen off, where the ends were dangling, loose and trailing behind. So it is a case of all or nothing.

If it is nothing, then we are certain to be rejected as unworthy and unfaithful. The only way to make any real progress in God's sight is as we might expect, to try to serve Him with all our hearts, all the time; this is cleaving to Him. It does not matter what other people think of us; we are not in the Truth to make a show and win the praise of men. All that matters is whether we are fulfilling the purpose for which we have been called; to be a people that belong to God because of having their Father's Name in the front of their minds — in their foreheads, as the Revelation expresses it. This is what leads to being a praise and a glory to Him; we hope to see how.

Does it depend upon the effect in our daily lives of having the Name of God in the front of our minds? We have seen how David constantly sought an answer of God in his difficulties. How often do we? We might pray to God every night; we might pray to Him every morning. What about other times during the day; do we not need Him to control our tongues, make decisions — major and minor — direct our thinking in all sorts of ways, through the day? If we please ourselves during the day, and only remember God at bed-time or on Sundays, it could hardly be likened to a girdle tied round the waist of a man that was in touch all the time. Would it not, in fact, be a lack of cleaving to Him, bringing the penalty that our ways, our words, and actions would be more strongly coloured by the flesh than the spirit?

The Benefits of Cleaving.

So let us now try and examine in one or two details just what are the effects of this *cleaving* to God, that can and should give us His Name, make us a praise and a glory to Him? In short, does it not amount to taking on a measure of His noble and glorious qualities by virtue of a close association with Him? Let us remind ourselves of a few of these exquisite qualities from Psalm 86:15:

“But thou art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.”

It is by no means a coincidence that this Psalm is entitled “A Prayer of David.” This is David “as a man after God's own heart”, with the Name of God in the front of his mind. We will remember the effect of this in his gracious and respectful attitude towards his unworthy persecutor. Though a man of war, and accustomed to slaying the Lord's enemies, he not only forbade to dispose of Saul his enemy, but reproached himself even for cutting off a piece of his garment as evidence. Does not this restraint reflect the graciousness of God; in such an action, was not David glorifying the God from whom he gained this virtue?

We know that we do not have occasions just like this in our lives, but there are very many ways of manifesting the grace of God; His

compassion, patience, love, mercy; and so become a glory to Him. His grace and His glory are manifested in everyday life, not only by patience, but kindness, consideration, good manners, being slow to speak and slow to wrath, instead of peppery, contradictory, boastful, and so on. So again, what makes the difference between bearing the Name of God; being a praise and a glory; and being a shame to Him, as probably we all are at times?

It is this constant *cleaving* to God in the spirit of David and of Christ, as we read from the prayer and Psalm:

“Bow down thine ear, O Lord, and hear me: for I am poor and needy . . . O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.” (Psalm 86:1 and 16)

If we want to *cleave* to God we shall need His strength for the particular work that glorifies Him: strength to *fulfil* all righteousness, having sought His will.

A.E.I.

“Bless the Lord, O my Soul.”

How often we speak of the great blessings we know as children of God, and to be mindful of the hand of our Father upon us to bless is a necessary way to think in order to truly value our position. Certainly, David thought in this manner, as he revealed through prayer, his desire to seek the hand of God upon him to remove him from affliction and thus be blessed, as recorded in Psalm 102:1-2:

“Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee. Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day when I call answer me speedily.”

From these words, can we not discern how David valued and recognised his place in the sight of God, as being dependent upon Him, subject to His will; therefore, he sought, during the affliction of probation, the blessings of God. David realised there were many ways God extends His hand to bless those who are His, for we read in Psalm 103:3-5, that it is God:

“Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things . . .”

All of these blessings spoken of by David are extended through the power of God, blessings which each of us in the past have known, which at present do know, and in the time to come hope to know.

To stop and consider our position in view of such provisions as these during our sojourn in this life is to echo David's sentiments: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:4) Must we not question, brethren and sisters, our reaction to this knowledge that God IS mindful of each and every one of us? To perhaps help us to know what our response should be, David reveals his spirit in the first two verses of the Psalm 103, saying:

"Bless the *Lord*, O my soul: and all that is within me, Bless his holy name. Bless the *Lord*, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

The word "bless" used here comes from a prime root meaning "to kneel" and is used as such by David in Psalm 95:6, saying:

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the *Lord* our maker."

To kneel down as such before God *is* to bless God, really to make all of our living bow down and so give glory to Him.

Daniel an Example.

The example of Daniel can help us to see how our living, our actions can bless God. We read in Daniel 6:10:

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed," (We remember the decree which Darius signed said that "whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, except of himself, he shall be cast into a den of lions.") ". . . he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." (prior to Darius' decree)

Here Daniel's spirit is revealed, a spirit which sought in all things to submit to God, a spirit which could not be moved to serve any other law but that of his God, even though it meant great danger by going against a royal decree. Can we see here how surely Daniel's living blessed God, how his mode of life was known even to those around him, that his first and foremost desire was to serve God; and as such, did it not bring blessing upon the name of God? It did, indeed, and because of Daniel's submission, we know further how great was the mercy of God shown toward him to deliver and cause him to be blessed as he prospered in the purpose of God. Must not our desire be to bless God likewise, so to come to know God's continued mercy and care for us?

To help us in such a desire to *kneel down* before God, to submit our spirit to His greater spirit and thereby bless His name, David tells us further in Psalm 103:

“ . . . great is his mercy toward them that fear him.” (verse 11)

“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the *Lord* pitieth (is merciful) them that fear him.” (verse 13)

“But the mercy of the *Lord* is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children’s children; To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.”

(verses 17 and 18)

Do not these words clearly speak to us of the godly fear, the reverence we must have to obtain mercy from God for obedience to His word. Could we thus infer from David’s words to “Bless the *Lord*,” a daily fear is required within us to enable us to *kneel down* and submit ourselves in a way pleasing to God to maintain hope in His mercy to bless? Was not this the fear within Daniel which allowed him to bless God, to *kneel down*, to say to those around him, there is but one God, the God of Israel, unto whom only praise and honour is due?

Present Help.

We are exhorted, then, how we, too, must attempt to grow in our fear of God, for really this is our whole duty in the learning of God’s word, what He requires in our working toward the mercy of that salvation promised. As our brother Paul also affirms in writing to his Hebrew brethren:

“Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.”

Hebrews 4:1)

“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” (Hebrews 12:28)

These words of Paul speak plainly to us that what is required is a fear of God in order to bless His holy name. David questions in Psalms 25:12-14:

“What man is he that feareth the *Lord*?”

And answers:

“ . . . him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth. The secret of the *Lord* is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant.”

How helpful these words are to instruct and remind us that in our desire to serve God in fear, it is only through the secret intimacy, or closeness of God that such is possible. This closeness to God we have been shown — it can only be accomplished through the media-

tion of Christ, the one who, in perfect fear of His Father, was able in *all* things to glorify God's holy name. How well David valued and recognised the need of such a means of closeness with God, and we too must take such thoughts to heart, to allow our spirit to be moved in fear, which will not only bring God's mercy upon us to strengthen and encourage, but also help us in the desire to bless His name in all that we do in submission to His will. David further reminds us of this mercy of God as we struggle in hope in Psalm 48:14:

“For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.”

To have this assured guidance now through Christ during our probation is our greatest blessing as surely as it was for our brethren of old as they looked forward to Him who would be The Light of the world, through whom an eternal closeness with God would be possible.

We must, brethren and sisters, submit ourselves to this guidance, thereby looking forward in fear, yet in hope, of *the* blessing to be granted *only* those who, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, are allowed to be united together in blessing God eternally. Let us, therefore, take heed in these last days of God's blessings upon us and so be mindful in all our living to bless the Lord.

M.C.S.



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

“. . . *And His number is six hundred threescore and six.*”

(Revelations 13:18)

Writing on the above prophecy, Dr. Thomas said:

“The name to be ascertained, then, is the Name of ‘the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, who opposeth and exalts himself over every one called a god, or . . . worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of the god as a god, publicly showing himself that he is a god.’ This Man of Sin is not a single person; but an order of men, ruling imperiously and imperially, in Rome — the Man-Image set up for worship there. All things have their names, and this Man-Image is no exception to the rule. What then is his name? — the name of the power represented by the Image? It is evidently not literally revealed, or we should be able to read it plainly in the prophecy. It is like every thing else in this wonderful book. It is revealed in an enigma What then is the solution of the riddle? Irenaeus was of the opinion that . . . Lateinos was the name. He says, that ‘the name Lateinos contains the number of 666; and it is very likely, because the last kingdom is so called, for they are Latins who now reign; but in this we will not glory.’

From this it is evident, that he regarded the subject of the name as a royalty, not a person — the Latin Kingdom. Irenaeus living so near the time when the apocalypse was given, may have received the name through his friend Polycarp from John himself. Irenaeus used to attend the expositions of Polycarp, whom he styles ‘that blessed apostolical presbyter.’

He says, ‘Polycarp related to us his converse with John, and with the rest of those who had seen the Lord;’ and in respect to what he told his hearers, Irenaeus says, ‘I wrote them not on paper, but on my heart; and ever since, through the grace of God, I retain a genuine remembrance of them.’ It is hardly probable that Polycarp, a member and presbyter of the ecclesia in Smyrna, would converse with John, and not seek to learn from him the probable solution of this enigma of the name of the Antichrist. If John told him Lateinos, it is easy to see how Irenaeus came by it”

A century or more has elapsed since Dr. Thomas wrote the above words, and then upon the religious world scene has erupted trouble in the Roman Catholic Church over the change in the order of the mass which had been followed up to 1969. The Second Vatican Council, which was convened in the early nineteen-sixties brought in alterations in the ritual and style of the Roman Church.

As a result the four hundred year old Latin Tridentine mass was placed upon one side and bishops were given the option of conducting their services in their own mother tongue. But there has been considerable protest. Many have proclaimed not only their desire but also their determination to go back to the Tridentine form of worship.

This form of mass incidentally came about as a result of the Council of Trent (1545–1563) which met to deal with controversial points whereby the “Holy Roman Emperor” hoped there would be reconciliation with the Protestants. This however was not achieved by the Council; but formulated from those deliberations came the Tridentine Catechism (1566) and additions to the service. This became a Catholic tradition during the intervening centuries.

But the main objection to the recent change appears to be a desire to keep the Mass in Latin rather than in opening the Mass into being spoken in the respective tongues of various Catholic nations or congregations. It is not ecumenicism that is rejected therefore, except amongst one or two of the more prominent leaders of the schism, but rather a rejection of the move from the traditional use of saying Mass in Latin. This would appear to be very significant in the light of what Dr. Thomas said a hundred years ago.

Extracts from some of the comments of protest may help the mind to assess the situation viz:

“Mr. . . . writes of Catholics 400 years ago accepting the Latin rite. What on earth does he think they accepted before that? The main body of the Mass has been substantially unchanged since, at the latest, the sixth century. Trent merely imposed a uniformity, where there had been a variety of rites, all orthodox

“The mainstay of the Catholic faith is the Latine Tridentine Mass. It was always the Mass that was attacked when persecution of the Church was in vogue. It is now that self-same Mass that is being threatened yet again — but this time from within.”

“It is strange that Latin, which made Western Catholics universally at home, should be squeezed out in a time of mass education and mass travel . . . services are made almost unbearable by the intrusion of the Celebrant’s idiosyncrasies,

unliturgical hymns, unworthy music, the banal English that often departs from the authentic Latin text”

There will undoubtedly be endeavours to compromise, as a result of such fierce objections to the relinquishing of the use of Latin in services. Perhaps the following indicates the way out of the dilemma that will be used:

“Writing from Rome (of all places) Mr. . . . says that the second Vatican Council ordered the Latin of the Mass to be replaced by modern languages. This common error is understandable; for the Council or ‘the spirit of the Council’ is called in aid by innovators who can rely on most Catholics not reading the Council documents. In fact, the Council decreed: ‘The use of the Latin language is to be preserved in the Latin (viz, not Greek, etc) rites’. The Council gave bishops discretion in the introduction of the vernacular. Latin remains the prescribed norm.”

So, as a result of great protest, the use of Latin will not be completely removed from the ceremonies of the Roman Church (even though it is a dead language), and even though ecumenism continues to proceed.

The following may be of interest in the context of this article:

“The apostle wrote in Greek, yet he used a few Hebrew names in this book the Revelation, so perhaps we may think he alluded to a name in that language: and it is most astonishing that the word Romiith in Hebrew, which answers to Lateinos, signifying Roman, contains in numerical letters exactly six hundred and sixty six. Nor can any other two words be produced from two different languages, which so nearly agree together in meaning, and exactly stand for the same number in numerical letters; the coincidence is really most surprising.

As John could only refer to the Greek or the Hebrew language in this matter; and as the number of the name of the Latin man, or the Roman, in both languages is exactly the number of the beast; I see no occasion to doubt, either about the beast or his number, especially as Irenaeus in the second century put the same construction on it. — Romiith is indeed feminine; but it may signify either the Roman Church, or kingdom, the Hebrew words for both which are feminine.

The word Latinus, or Lateinos, is, however, in all respects by far the most satisfactory, notwithstanding this coincidence — ‘No name’, though it may possibly comprehend the number six hundred and sixty six, can be the name of the beast, unless it equally answers in every other particular to the prophetic description of that name. — Lateinos is at once

the name of a man, (the ancient king of Latium, whence Rome had its origin,) the title of an empire; and the distinguishing appellation of every individual in that empire: and when the sum of its numerical letters is taken in the Greek language, . . . it amounts to six hundred and sixty six.

On these grounds then, I do not hesitate to assert, that Latinus, and nothing but Latinus, is the name of the beast”

The following words of a pioneer may form a fitting conclusion to this article. “If a man have an ear, let him hear.” The multitude admire various features of the Roman System which commend themselves to human appreciation — its antiquity, its numbers, its learning, its wealth, its political status, its history etc. They think it the most odious form of uncharity to doubt the salvability of those who belong to its communion. Be it ours to accept the odium consequent on receiving the word of God. This word says — and it strikingly calls our attention to the fact — that those only worship the beast whose names are not written in the Lamb’s book of life.

Consequently, it is impossible for anyone realising this to have the least sympathy with the system or its ramifications . . . , and if it must be considered uncharitable to be on God’s side, wise men will suffer the rebuke, awaiting in patience and submission the day spoken of . . . when God will destroy Christendom, in preparation for the establishment of His own glorious kingdom in all the earth.

D.L.



News from the Ecclesias

EDEN, NEW YORK: Grange Hall, Church Street,

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11:30 a.m., Sunday School 1:30 p.m., Bible Class: Midweek: Forestville, Buffalo, Hamburg, and Orchard Park. Alternative Week: Revelation Study.

As God's hand works in His house, we are grateful for the counsel and help of brethren and sisters, united in the work of helping one another in the struggle Zionward.

It is in a time of testing that our faith needs this strengthening if we are to hope to endure until Jesus comes to establish His kingdom.

The unrest and evil in the world tell us that this time must be close. Let us, together, lift up our heads in the hope of redemption.

J.A.DeF.

"PENTRIP", Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread: Sundays, 11:30 a.m.
Bible Class: Mid-Week.

Two children attended our Sunday School on two occasions in October. It is also intended to pass a magazine to a neighbour who is showing some interest.

The sheep are down from the hills into their winter quarters and are enjoying the vivid new growth of grass due to the rain stimulating the growth after the long dry summer.

per D.L.

MANCHESTER: Ryecroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, Manchester.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread: 11.30 a.m.
Lecture on the first Sunday in the month at 3.30 p.m.
Bible Class: 7.30 p.m. in the above room Friday evenings.

Taking advantage of the striking and unusual happening in England recently of earthquakes, particularly in the North West, the lecture for the month is entitled:

"Earthquake in Liverpool, Warrington . . . Where Next?

Where will be the final earthquake. Only the Bible can answer."

Apart from what interest this may arouse, it will be helpful to us all to realise how near are signs to us in these last days.

W.V.B.