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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

“Take heed that ye be not deceived”

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“AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD”

“THE LOVE OF GOD”

“BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL, AND FORGET NOT
ALL HIS BENEFITS”

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

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At the Table of the Lord

“To Put You . . . In Remembrance”

How striking are the words of the Apostle Peter found in the second epistle to his brethren. They were apparently written shortly before his death, for we read:

“Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.”

II Peter 1:14

The chronology places these words approximately thirty-three years after the death of the Lord Jesus. Shortly before ascending to His Father, Jesus said to Peter:

“— When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thine hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.” John 21:18, 19

Jesus' exhortation to Peter was “Follow me” until death comes. To follow involves walking in the same way or path. Peter did walk for thirty-three years in the way of His Master as he faithfully witnessed. He was not afraid to be identified as belonging to Him, without doubt seeking to make up for his earlier failures when he had added to Jesus' trial and finally denied his Lord. It was surely from this long life of striving to change and to faithfully follow Jesus, and from the help his experiences brought him as God's hand worked, that Peter was able to write to his brethren encouraging, correcting, and upbuilding in their trials. We do not know exactly how Peter died, but tradition says he was killed in Rome, a steadfast upholder of the truth, following Jesus to the end of his life.

“To Stir You Up”

With this background we can find help in our present struggles as we think about Peter. He had an important purpose in mind when he wrote to his brethren.

“Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.” Verse 12

These were not to be new thoughts to them, but Peter knew how easily the spiritual help can be lost. He continued:

“Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;” verse 13

Further Peter, having his death in view said:

“Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.”
verse 15

We are given an indication of how important he felt this message to be as we listen to his words:

“This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days, scoffers, walking after their own lusts.” II Peter 3:1-3

It was a perilous time for the followers of the Lord Jesus — they needed this strong reminder. Is it not a perilous time now, Brethren and Sisters, for those who seek a place in His Kingdom by following Him? There are indeed scoffers, or as the word means, mockers, some who would ridicule the way of God, seeking their own desires and subverting all else to the pursuit of these desires. These say, “Where is the promise of his coming?” Do they not really mean — “It’s a long way off — we have plenty of time to obey God **after** we indulge our flesh for a while”? How displeasing to God, yet how easily we can fall into such a way of thinking because we by nature want to do our own things first and then the things of God. Peter, aware of this danger, determined to awaken them, to inspire their minds. His words apply just as well to ourselves, for we have that same need to be roused up at times. How did Peter go about this work? By reminding them that there are:

“ — given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” II Peter 1:4

Peter brought these promises of blessing to the minds of those he loved, in this way clarifying the hope, the only hope which would sustain them. How easily the human mind can overlook the power of these promises, becoming accustomed to them and so losing the wonder and incentive of this provision. Did not Jesus command us, "This do in **remembrance** of me." — as we have done this morning, trying to keep aware of the precious promises God has granted to His children through His Son. What privilege is ours in being allowed to join in fellowship with Him at this table, as Peter reminds us:

" — by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature —"

Partakers — having a share of the nature of the Almighty and His Son; is this not our earnest hope, our importunate prayer, to be complete and perfectly in companionship and fellowship with Jesus when He comes, experiencing immortality, the divine nature promised to those who overcome?

"Partakers of Christ's Sufferings"

Hope for this blessing promised is possible only as there is a striving and a willingness to share His experience now, in submission. This inevitably will bring trials and pain. Peter wrote:

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, in as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy." I Peter 4:12, 13

What was Jesus' fiery trial? Would He obey God? Would He put away His own desires? Would He submit His flesh to being crucified, recognizing it for what it is — fit only to die, to be destroyed? Not many **can** submit to such trial, allowing the spirit to burn and consume the flesh, aware and experiencing His mercy. This alone can bring forth a sweet smell to ascend unto the Father.

Was not this what Peter had in mind as he sought to stir up his brethren to remembrance — to bring to mind again their vow, and the promises from God as they strove to fulfill it. It would appear that those to whom Peter was writing were in need of stirring up, or awakening. Why would this be, for remember this epistle is addressed to, " — them that have like precious faith with us." Why should these who were Peter's brethren need stirring up? Could it be that they were becoming complacent, not

striving to be ready for Jesus' coming? Peter must have felt they lacked. What of ourselves, Brethren and Sisters, don't we need to be stirred up on occasion — to be helped lest we forget our vow to follow Jesus, to keep in mind the need for fiery trial? If we do not experience such, how will the flesh be consumed? Did not Paul say:

“Our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also partakers of the consolation (comfort)”. II Cor. 1:7

It is only as there is a sharing of His sufferings, that there can be the comfort of His covering, the hope of redemption, and the receiving of divine nature, thereby escaping for ever the corruption that is in the world through lust. How truly good for us that Peter does stir up. For we must be ever ready. When Peter looked into his own mind, he would no doubt recall how he failed Jesus, how he denied Him. This remembrance, even after thirty years would bring sorrow to his heart, but above all, a desire to make up, to show Jesus that he had learned. He was determined to be concerned with the things of the Spirit and not to be deterred by the fears or wants of the flesh. He no doubt suffered much during those thirty-three years after Jesus was taken up to His Father. It can be seen how he gained by his suffering; we can see his steadfastness, his determination. Can we then, Brethren and Sisters, profit by his example? When we face trial, fiery trial, whether it be in our work, in our bodies as we experience illness or handicaps, in the sometimes tedium of our daily living, are we being awakened to renewed awareness, turned aside from a natural tendency to feel that all things will go on and we have time? We need this trial and God in His infinite wisdom and mercy has caused it to come upon us.

What is the fiery testing to work in us? Peter was very clear as he exhorted his brethren:

“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness love.” II Peter 1:5-7

Upon reading these words, it may appear that each one of these qualities are needed before the next can be found. But do we not find by experience, Brethren and Sisters, that they will grow together bit by bit as we strive to take hold of the Spirit's help?

Let us seek these attributes with the diligence or earnest care, forwardness which Peter tells us is needed. We are to show along with faith, virtue. This means excellence, readiness, and points out our need to be forward, anxious and prepared to give our best to God. As growth comes, knowledge increases, an awareness of God's great blessing and purpose, and a response to it. Along with this, temperance may also find its place — control and balance — being able to say NO to self and it's lusts. With control develops patience, a bearing under. How hard it is for the human mind to submit, to wait on God through circumstances which seem so urgent to ourselves. To wait as Jesus did in the spirit of Abba, Father, yet how pleasing to our Father to observe this willing dependence on Him. In all this we will grow toward godliness. Perhaps the best way to understand godliness is through the Father's command in Leviticus 19 and 2:

“Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy.” No one, of course, can be like God, but must we not be struggling always toward Him and His ways. He looks for this in His children. Peter exhorts us to add to our efforts a quality called brotherly kindness. Love of the brethren is an evidence of our love for God.

Does not John ask us a sobering question:

“ — he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” I John 4:20

As there is determination and persistence to increase faith through pursuing these qualities of which Peter speaks, we will find that love has been nourished and has developed — that priceless bond which unites those who are striving, as Jesus, to please the Father above all else.

Let us then take Peter's words into our hearts, let us be stirred up, let us be more aware of our responsibilities as we struggle to follow Jesus, to partake of His suffering, hoping to partake of His divine nature. We **are** tested, we **are** brought low, we **are** tried by fire . . . but who does it? God! And for what purpose? To strengthen us, to prove what we are, to bring us to that love which Peter knew.

Love for God, love for Jesus, and for one another.

As we ponder Peter's care for his brethren, his perception of their weaknesses and needs, his fervent desire for their spiritual health and growth, can we not marvel and take example from our brother's clear determination to obey his Lord's particular injunction to him. “Feed my sheep.” John 21:15-17

Shall we not partake of the food he has provided for us?

J.A.DeF.

The Love of God

As we look to the words John felt compelled to write as he was directed by the Hand of God, they make known what God looks for in us as His children. Much of I John dwells upon love, the love of God, the love of His Son, and the love that the children of God must reflect. John's words look at the need to respect one's place in God's sight and serve as practical help in our striving to be God's children; and, in our striving to reflect that love.

We have defined in I John chapter 5:3 what the love of God is:

“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”

Love is the doing and keeping of God's commandments. When we reflect on that a moment, we see that at times we fail to keep those commands, fail to keep His Word; yet, this is the love of God, we are told “his commandments are not grievous”. The word **grievous** we find means weighty and gives the thought of having a weight to be borne. God's commands are not to be grievous, are not to be overbearing. Our flesh however, can make those commands of such a nature that we might struggle against them and not show trust as we strive to show love in our pilgrimage.

We know the Lord Jesus was One who perfectly kept His Father's commandments. His Words are of particular help to us as we look to our struggles relative to the struggles He was to bear. In Matthew 11:28 we read:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

Familiar words, yet words which we must stop and ponder. Even though we are heavy laden, weighted down, Jesus says, “Come . . . and I will give you rest”. In these few words Jesus reveals that there is a need to look to something beyond the weight — those things which may appear to make God's commandments look grievous. Verse 29 continues:

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

Here perhaps is the key in keeping the weightiness of the burdens in proper perspective — to learn of Jesus. He was meek and lowly in heart. It is when we are not meek and lowly that other things come to burden and weigh us down. We can lose perspective. But His desire is that we “find rest unto your (our) souls”. It is this rest that Jesus perceived as His duty and responsibility to provide and as verse 30 continues:

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light”.

How could Jesus say this? We seem to be heavily burdened at times. Yet, when we compare what the Lord Jesus has done, how could He perceive His burden as light? Obviously Jesus’ view of His burden was different. He had full trust and belief in what God had spoken to Him as His beloved Son and the perfection of that love, which allowed Him to say “my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” This was not the flesh speaking. His mind and spirit was one that could view His circumstances and say, if God is with me, I can be strengthened to do anything, to carry any weight.

When burdens come upon us we must not lose perspective, but rather put our trust and confidence in God’s provision of the Lord Jesus so that our spirit can be such that God’s commandments are not grievous. I Peter 5:6-7 seems to express the perceiving of the process of love as we are told:

“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”

Here is the same perception Jesus spoke of in Matthew. This is what Jesus was saying. There is this need to look to God and His provisions, and to trust and believe that He does care and does know our every circumstance, and knowing it, strives to have us follow His commands so they are not weighty nor grievous. The word **care** used in I Peter 5 . . . “Casting all your **care** . . . means distraction. How often we find that the distractions are what will pull us away and make our burdens more heavy to bear. The word **careth**, used in “. . . for he **careth** for you”, means to be of interest. Isn’t this what God looks for in His children? As we perceive the distractions and if we keep them in the proper perspective, they are of interest to God. He desires as He looks into our hearts to see that we are humbling ourselves under His mighty hand, and to see if we can believe He will help us to overcome.

In Phillippians 4:6 we read about this care in our living:

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”

Again it is how we bear our burdens; to not give over-care to anything must be recognized. Does this not follow the thought of “. . . Casting all your care . . .” or distractions — upon God, not giving over-care to anything, and not holding anything as impossible to be overcome. By doing this the feeling of failure because we feel it is too weighty can be properly perceived. How? “Cast your care upon Him”, and “Let your requests be made known”. This allows God to recognize our perception and our need to look to Him for help first and foremost. This is our understanding that as it was in Jesus’ life, even so much help and care can be granted to us to help us find that rest. As Phil 4:7 confirms:

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

If we can only overlook the burdens of our flesh and trust in God; God has said He will give peace, and it will come to us. But our hearts and minds must be toward the Lord Jesus and really toward the fulfillment of God’s commandments.

What is God’s desire in those to whom He reveals His Word? Is it not that they come to the end which He has promised? In II Peter 3:9 we read:

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

Does this not hold out and reveal to us the love of God? God in making a promise not only makes it, but holds it out as something possible to attain. God will provide in every circumstance so we must guard against becoming too burdened and so perish, but rather come to repentance. This gives credence to the fact that there will be failure in all our lives, but the hope that if we can think differently (repent) and perceive our circumstances to effect the balance God looks for, the help is there, and the cares of our living can be diminished.

What must we do? John gives us food for thought:

“And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.” I John 1:4

We must perceive our struggles, our probation, as one of joy; and, when it is not of joy, doesn't it say that we are making God's commandments grievous when they should not be? John fully recognized this joy was what God required. If that joy is in us, much help can be granted and much care can be given through God who out of love desires that all come to the end of His purpose — His Kingdom.

Returning to I John 5:3, the Lord Jesus kept perfectly the commandments of God, and we are called to this effort as we read in verses 1 and 2:

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.”

We must look then, to God's commandments in a way which is perhaps different than “thou shalt” or “thou shalt not” — but look as Jesus did, recognizing they are not given to pull down, but rather to be a guide and learn from them that God desires only one thing — that we reflect the love He shows to us and to have that joy which can keep alive our hope. How much love was in John. He was known as the beloved Disciple of the Lord Jesus. John followed after the Lord Jesus, recognizing his place, just as we must recognize our place, that in God's mercy we can do it. We can overcome the burdens we feel, but only as we recognize the need to put down our flesh and keep the love and joy of keeping God's commands continually in front of us.

We can find help to balance the weights that come upon us through God's care in providing His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased and through whom we can be pleasing.

M.C.S.



**“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not
all his benefits.”**

(Psalm 103:2)

“And the Lord called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd, and of the flock.

If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord.

And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him, to make atonement for him.”

(Lev. 1:1-4)

How profound yet simple the teaching of the law of God, that sinful man is only worthy of death, and that upon this acknowledgment God is gracious and merciful to offer life eternal.

And so in this world of unbelief where mens hearts are failing them for fear of what is coming to pass, the children of God are called to be exhibitions of His grace having His law (Word) engrafted upon the heart.

“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you” is the instruction, and as we draw near there comes the feeling that we do belong to Him, and may speak to Him in the way He allows. Our hearts are to be filled with His law, for out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh and if this be so then the words spoken are from the counsel of God, as God has promised:

“I have put my words in thy mouth and I have covered thee in the shadow of my hand — — — .”

(Isaiah 51:16)

In Psalm 103 we have the words of David forcibly reminding us of his innermost thoughts that enabled him to make melody in his heart as he contemplated the goodness and kindness and mercy of God.

“To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.”

(Psalm 103:18)

“He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth;

“And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man’s heart.”

(Psalm 104:14-15)

No wonder does he commence this chapter:

“Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.”

(Psalm 104:1)

These sublime words, Bless the Lord, are so misused by those in ignorance as to rob them of their true meaning, for they can only fit the lips of those who really experience in their lives the wonderful feeling that God is with them. Consider then the Spirit words uttered by David and listen to the melody of a heart devoted in every way to the great God of Israel.

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: 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; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”

(Psalm 103:2-5)

David not only knew, but he could feel the power of the Spirit which would renew his youth, and would make him in the day of salvation “mount up with wings as an eagle” and be able to run and not be weary, to walk and not faint.

Can we then feel this same power? and be helped to remember that there will not be a single one in the day of salvation but who will wish to cry out —

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.”

Continuing in Psalm 103:6 we read:

“The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.”

Who are these, for whom the Lord cares and on whose behalf He is prepared to execute righteousness and judgment? Do we get the answer in Psalm 9:9-10:

“The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.

And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.”

The oppressed then are those “that know thy name”, captives in the prison house of sin and death who have experienced a foretaste of liberation only to find how great is the struggle for deliverance from the oppression of “the body of this death”

(Romans 7:24)

How helpful is the thought of David that the Almighty does care for the oppressed and in a very real and practical sense. He does that which is right and just and as our frail faith calls for an example the Spirit answers:

“He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.”

(Psalm 103:7)

and as we contemplate what this refers to, we behold, as a great panorama of divine judgment is unfolded to our view, that in which is seen events affecting the history of the greatest nation upon earth, and out of the mighty convulsion a people being drawn out, flowing as a river, leaving the bondage and oppression of Egypt, passing through the waters of baptism in the Red Sea, and journeying through the wilderness towards the Holy Land, to the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

It all happened in the days of Moses and it has been happening ever since. The power which overwhelmed Pharaoh and slew the Egyptians in the waters of the Red Sea is no less powerful today. His purpose has not changed, the brethren and sisters of the Lord Jesus are as precious to Him now as those Israelites who made their way along the bed of the sea and found that not one thing failed of all that the Lord had promised.

Truly the great God did execute righteousness and judgment for Israel of old, but how ungrateful they were.

What of us?

Will we then learn from their record and take heed? How true then and up to date are these words of David who was a man after God's own heart, shown in Psalm 103.2-5. But there can be no deliverance unless we understand and believe the instruction and wisdom contained in God's law as shown in Leviticus 1:1-4. There must be a recognition that we are worthy to die and that our offering or service to God (as in verse 3) is 'of our own free will'

J.S.



Correspondence

Letter from T. H. (Australia)

“With deference may I observe that although it is perhaps self-comforting to refer constantly to “those who once had the Truth”, this attitude can contribute to almost a self-fulfilment of the usual negative answer to the question “Will he find the faith on the earth?””

Answer

While appreciating the difficulty of our correspondent who sees the “Ecclesial world” beset by problems. Surely the answer is as follows:-

“———that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed ——.”
(1 Thess. 2:3)

Those who do not have the Truth cannot fall away from it. Those who fall away from it, in fulfilment of what has been prophesied, cannot be defined in any other term than apostasy.

Concerning the negative approach to the question, “Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8) does not the following, answer that question?:-

“Then we which are ALIVE and REMAIN shall be caught up together with them (the dead) in the clouds, to meet the Lord ——.”
(1 Thess. 4:17)

Further remarks from T. H.

“——— having once belonged to a most exclusive section. Such exclusivity can be a drying up, shrivelling thing just as much as it can be spiritually cleansing — perhaps more the former.”

Answer.

The Truth is a balance, a deviation from which, however zealous the profession, thwarts the working of the Spirit.

Hence the instruction of the Spirit:-

“Quench not the Spirit.”
(1 Thess. 5:19)

“——— the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.”

(Rev. 2:15)

“Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself? Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?”

(Eccles. 7:16-17)

There can indeed be a shrivelling process if the above instruction is not heeded. Exclusivity is no criteria if there is no balance. The balance which the Spirit of Christ gives makes (in its reasonableness) ‘the yoke easy and the burden light’, and so the Spirit is enabled to work upon the Ecclesia that which God desires for the Ecclesia.

Further comments from T. H.

“I have a query or two from your December 1981 issue: particularly, what is your view of the person coming to Truth’s enlightenment in a divorced but not re-married state — the former partner still living. May he / she remarry, after coming in to the Ecclesia? If marriages in darkness are not God-ordained, therefore presumably not God-sanctified, how binding are they 1/ in darkness. 2/ in the Ecclesia, after the couple married in the darkness come to the Truth?”

Answer.

“Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband:

But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife — — —.

If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.

And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband — — —.

But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases; but God hath called us to peace.”

(1 Cor. 7:10-15)

If the unbelieving is not to be put away by one called to the Truth, but may be allowed to depart for the sake of peace, requiring the one in the Truth to "remain unmarried". How could it be said (in principle) that there is a difference where one who is divorced comes to the Truth in a state where he or she is not re-married? Is not the answer to that position in life the following injunction:-

"——— let her (him) remain unmarried, or be reconciled."?

The fundamental requirement, would it not seem, is the upholding of marriage whether inside or outside the Truth? Of course God does not join together those who are not in the Truth. On the other hand where divorce has taken place outside the Truth and there has been re-marriage outside the Truth, before coming to the Truth, is not the answer to that situation, "——— if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him." etc.?

Further question from T. H.

Just how do you perceive the Spirit guidance to be given?

Answer

Is not the Spirit's guidance in the word of truth? Misinterpretation of the scripture's instruction cannot be the Spirit's guidance. What then enables men and women to perceive the meaning; is it their own cleverness, or is it the help of God? If God helps brethren and sisters to understand what He has laid upon record. (i.e. the Truth) is that not the Spirit's guidance?



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

“And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

(Daniel 2:43-44)

Ten kings (or kingdoms) are referred to in the above prophecy, which are to be crushed at the appearing of the kingdom of God. The signs in the world speak of the near approach of that kingdom. Where then are the ten kings or kingdoms, which as iron and clay are together in one confederacy but are unable, as those products of the earth are unable to “cleave one to another”?

The Common Market is twenty-five years old, but on that anniversary date at the end of March this year the time passed comparatively unremarked and uncelebrated amongst the Community's two-hundred and seventy-million people.

There has, undoubtedly, been some remarkable achievements in Europe through the Common Market after centuries of bloodshed and hostility.

Nevertheless, if not in a military sense, tensions still exist because national interests still predominate in the thinkings of the leaders of Western Europe.

The Treaty of Rome established the Common Market on March 25th, 1957.

The signatories were Italy, France, Germany, Holland, Belgium and Luxemborg..

The leading up to this commenced soon after the second world war when the European coal and steel community was formed for the purpose of bringing Germany and France together by a supra-national authority over these industries which were particularly basic ones at the time. The old hostility of these two nations was

thus assuaged. Following which it seemed by the economic development that resulted, that there was much prosperity to be gained by close collaboration between countries close to another with similar economic backgrounds.

So other countries joined, followed by Britain. All looked forward to great gain and prosperity as the outcome of this arrangement. In 1972 a Paris summit conference of European leaders took place, when it was voiced that economic and monetary union would take place within ten years. Well, that period of time has now elapsed, but the economic and monetary union has not taken place. Now the British Parliamentary Opposition have pronounced that they will take the country out of the Common Market if they are successful at the next election; and the canvassing of the populace reveals that a considerable majority of British citizens agree with such a policy.

The Community's institutions have come under scornful criticism from almost all quarters; the Commission in Brussels is attacked as the purveyor of inefficient and wasteful policies as a result of unfeeling bureaucracy, and so it is said, does not deserve support. Judgments by the European Court of Justice, the supposed supreme legal authority, is on occasion ignored by the various Governments of the Community when they prefer their own interpretations of law.

The facts of course show that there have been benefits as well as disadvantages. Benefits, for example, of more consumer protection; the raising of standards of hygiene in food production; more safety requirements that have been built into manufactured products etc. But there has been a costly side to this alliance, which has particularly been a stumbling block to those countries which have borne a greater burden of the costs.

The President of the Commission recently said that the structure of the Community is "still precarious, vulnerable to storms which damage and destroy". "It may be that the Community is traversing the most difficult period in its history, for never have the winds of crisis blown so hard."

Of course this is what the scriptures have really foretold.

"——— the toes of the feet (ten) were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken ———."

And in the days of these kings (kingdoms) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom ———."

(Daniel 2:42-44)

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, Orchard Park and Buffalo.

Alternate Week: Revelation Study.

Gratitude is felt for the help granted to those in illness in that a measure of strength may be found.

As God's hand works on behalf of His house, we are thankful for the guidance given and the unity of mind evidenced.

The winter weather is waning and with the melting of the snow, the return of the birds, it reminds us of the re-awakening we all long for when the Lord Jesus returns. May we be helped to endure in the efforts to please the Almighty, hoping for a place in His glorious purpose.

J.A.DeF.

"PENTRIP" Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread: Sundays, 11.30 a.m.

Bible Class: Midweek.

We are most grateful, as the months pass by for these days of opportunity and Blessing.

Though trials do beset, we know we are strengthened and helped to hold on according as we look to Him.

It is a wonderful thing that we are so permitted to have the Fellowship which is leading to such excellent and abiding things.

per D.L.

MANCHESTER: Ryecroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, Manchester

Breaking of Bread: Sundays, 11.30 a.m.

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

It is gratifying to be able to help where one is seeking to be right.

This seeking comes about through God's Gracious working and longsuffering.

His mercy so evidently seen, is a great example, and directs the mind to emulate where there is humility and contrition, which enables forgiveness to be granted.

