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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

“ . . . MEET FOR THE MASTER'S USE . . . ”

What a great source of strength can be found in considering the “Acts of the Apostles.” As we through His word are able to travel with them, to participate in the help God provided, how much it can encourage in our determination to please the Father.

In Acts 13, we have seen (verses 2 - 4) how Saul and Barnabas were separated for the work to which God called them. Saul had been miraculously called to become a follower of the Lord Jesus. It happened as he was on the way to Damascus, shortly after having heard the testimony of Stephen, and having stood by as he was stoned.

Saul must have been impressed, pricked by what he had seen and heard; for we remember the words of Jesus to him as he was blinded by that great light from heaven:

“ . . . I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.” Acts 9:5

A **prick** is a goad, a sharp instrument used to force oxen to go in the direction desired. It is hurtful, but effective. This is the way God worked with Saul, goading him by the things he saw and heard. In this connection we think of the words of the Spirit:

“The words of the wise are as goads, . . . by these, my son, be admonished: . . . ” Ecclesiastes 12:11-12

Saul may have been moved or troubled by the goads, yet he continued in his persecution of the Lord Jesus' followers, until he was visited by God who had a purpose in mind for him. God said:

“ . . . He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.” Acts 9:15-16

Saul was, naturally speaking, a most unlikely individual to be chosen as a vessel for God's use. Yet the Father in His wisdom knew his heart, and so chose him to serve, to bear His name, to be identified as belonging to the Almighty. Let us meditate for a moment on this.

Having been shown God's power, he was quick to go about the work that was given to him. He did go to the Gentiles, he did witness before kings, he did witness also unto Israel. In doing so, he suffered for God's name, going about this work without murmuring or any further kicking against the pricks. Indeed we are shown his mind in Romans 9:20-24.

". . . Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? . . .

that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"

It was God who was calling Saul as a chosen vessel. He can discern every heart, and is ready to call any whom He knows can be vessels of honour, fit for His use.

The calling is not always as striking as was Saul's; yet it is still the Father working to take unto Himself a people who are to bear His name. They are privileged to be vessels which He forms and uses as He knows best. We remember, too, Paul's words in II Timothy 2:20-21.

". . . In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these (those unto dishonour) he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

All vessels are not alike: some are gold, some silver; some stone, wood, or earth; yet, all have a use if they are unto honor. The word "**honour**" comes from a root meaning to pay a price, as to purchase for use. Those whom God chooses are bought with a price, and God looks for them to try to be worthy. How can this be? By becoming "meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." Whether these vessels are silver, gold, earth, or wood matters not; but, what is of utmost importance is their usefulness in the work for which they were bought. Some, Paul tells us, are to honour; others to dishonour — not worthy of the price paid. Concerning such Paul says, it is necessary for a man to "purge himself from these," (unto dishonour) as a condition of being a vessel unto honor. As the potter looks upon his work,

accepting some as being good, useful, meet — and others as being flawed and useless, so God looks upon us, Brethren and Sisters. Are we striving to be vessels unto honor, whatever our status or talents may be? Are we striving to be suitable for His use, prepared to do any and every good work?

“Meet” means profitable, easily used, and this is how our Father desires His vessels to be.

Paul in writing to his Brother Philemon said of Onesimus, that he “. . . in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable (meet) to thee and to me.” (Philemon verse 11). Here was one who had been a vessel unto dishonour, but now, having changed, became meet or profitable unto both Paul and Philemon. How do we appear to one another, to God? Are we truly determined to be meet for use, prepared, willing to be made ready for every good work? Paul was — indeed, he gave all his living to that work; and, eventually died for the name of God. How clearly we can see that it was because of this mind that the Almighty separated Saul and Barnabas for the work where unto He had called them.

Can we enter into their minds as they started out on that work, filled with wonder that they had been chosen; determined to do it in faithfulness? Their brethren sent them away after they had prayed, fasted, and laid their hands upon them: beseeching that God’s name might be truly honored. In a measure, every one of us is called to that same work, to be His vessel. The work given may appear to be inconsequential when compared to that of Saul and Barnabas; but, it is given to prove each of us, whether we will do willingly, the best we are able. Let us then resolve to go about it as we know Saul and Barnabas would — fervently, united in it, with all brethren and sisters working for the same Master; praying for help, fasting from anything that might hinder it, knowing that the hands, the prayers of all are joined in that work. It is in this way we can become more useful and honourable vessels for our Father, and can hope for His guidance and blessing.

Indeed, do we not, Brethren and Sisters, feel His hand at work in our midst to chasten and guide as He works to mold us now in a time of probation, so that there can be the hope of becoming perfect immortal vessels when Jesus returns?

When we think upon this, should it not make us the more determined to go about the work given in a way that is profitable unto Him, recognizing that we do fail; we do need His help, His mercy in it?

Again Paul helps as he tells us:

“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”
II Corinthians 4:6

Truly Paul had seen that light on the way to Damascus, changing his life. Does not that same light in a degree shine upon us as we endeavour to respond to His hand? Paul goes on to remind:

“ . . . We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”
(Verse 7)

We are indeed earthen vessels, easily broken, requiring care having little strength; but, recognizing that all strength, all power comes from the One who has separated such unto His work.

ELIJAH'S MANTLE

Meditating on those who have been chosen vessels unto their Father, we think of Elijah and Elisha. In II Kings 2, we have seen how Elijah was taken up in a whirlwind, and Elisha continued on as a vessel of God. These, too, were men separated out for His work, who suffered for His name's sake. These were men who served Him in faithfulness and love, sustained by His mercy. We remember how Elijah was upon Horeb (Mount Sinai), and God came to him as a still small voice, sustaining and encouraging. God was not a devastating power to the prophet, but a strength in his despair. In I Kings 19:13 we are shown how Elijah reacted to that voice:

“And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle”

In covering his face, Elijah recognized his own earthly position and God's holiness, requiring a covering so that he couldn't look upon God.

As Elijah left Horeb, he “ . . . found Elisha . . . and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.” (Verse 19) This was his covering mantle which he cast upon Elisha as he passed by. Apparently there were no words spoken by Elijah, but simply a casting of his mantle upon Elisha. Elisha quickly responded: “. . . I will follow thee” Elijah replied meaningfully: “. . . Go back again: for what have I done to thee?” (Verse 20) Nevertheless, Elisha “. . . arose and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him” (Verse 21)

Elisha did perceive what had been done. His clear understanding and quick response was to obey the calling brought about by Elijah's mantle being cast upon him. What a comfort he would be to Elijah who had felt so alone in the work given, so inadequate to carry on in this work which jeopardized his life. Here was a companion, a fellow vessel given, just as Saul and Barnabas were sent forth together. In this relationship they worked until Elijah was taken up in the whirlwind and chariot of fire.

In II Kings 2:8 we are shown how Elijah knew the power which this mantle made possible as he -

“ . . . took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.”

Indeed the word **mantle** comes from a root meaning glory, goodness, mightiness — revealing what power that covering meant to the prophet. As Elisha witnessed this miracle, Elijah said:

“ . . . Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee . . . ”

Elisha's unhesitating answer was:

“ . . . Let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.”
(Verse 9)

He sought a duplication in himself of that godly power — so that he could be a vessel meet for his Master's use, and prepared for every good work. As Elijah was taken up, that mantle fell from him, and Elisha quickly took it up and used it once again to part the waters of Jordan. Seeing this great work performed by Elisha, the prophets were moved to say:

“ . . . The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha.” (Verse 15)

As Saul and Barnabas were separated unto the work to which God had called them; as Elisha took up the mantle of Elijah, and went on as a witness to Israel; were they not helped, encouraged, strengthened to be better vessels? Can these things help us, Brethren and Sisters, in our work, our calling as we determine to be useful, profitable vessels for God, vessels unto honor?

A vessel is a container, a “holder”. So let us carefully look into our hearts to make certain of what is contained there. God would have us, as useful vessels, filled with the things of His Spirit: His work, His House, His Son, His Hope given; and, He gives help to that end.

J.A.DeF.

My God is Jehovah of Whom is Salvation

In our portion this morning in Kings 17, we begin to read of the prophet Elijah, whose name translates; **My God is Jehovah of Whom is Salvation**. We see Elijah enters the record during the reign of Ahab:

“And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa, king of Judah, began Ahab, the son of Omri, to reign over Israel; and Ahab, the son of Omri, reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years.” I Kings 16:29

Ahab we remember was a king who did great evil in Israel as we read in verses 31-33:

“And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, that he took as his wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.

And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.

And Ahab made an grove and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.”

These were the circumstances into which Elijah was sent. He was sent to an idolatrous king, to a backsliding Israel to speak God’s word to them and turn them from their evil ways.

We may think of the trials which beset us at times, but if we can enter into the mind of Elijah, perhaps we can be helped by his ability to perform God’s word during times of great stress in his life.

We see Elijah was of the inhabitants of Gilead, the land which was given by Moses to Gad and Reuben. Most other information about him is little known, except for the fact that he was a Tishbite, as we see in I Kings 17:1

“And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain three years, but according to my word.”

It is obvious that God's anger had come to the point where His patience would no longer forbear because of the wickedness of Israel. We read in Leviticus 26:4 of God's word spoken to Israel regarding the rain and the goodness which God would bestow upon Israel if they would walk in His statutes:

"Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit."

Here was Elijah coming to Israel to rebuke them for their failure to walk in the ways of God their Father, who was now to bring a drought upon the land to chastise them for their rebellion. We read further in Lev. 26.

"And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies; they that hate you shall reign over you, and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.

And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass,

And your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield her increase neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits." 17-20

God's commands to Israel were specific; if they would keep His law and do according to His word, keeping God as their Father, He would be with them. He would give increase as was promised. But Elijah came to say that the rain would be withheld, an obvious witness to Israel of their unbelief and their turning away from God, choosing rather to align themselves with the heathen nations surrounding them.

It seems fitting that Elijah's name should be translated as, My God is Jehovah. We see how many times Elijah felt alone in his service to God. We read in I Kings 19:10

"And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts. For the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.

But God reassures and comforts Elijah with these words:

"Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." (verse 18)

How often we find in our circumstances that we feel alone, and often attempt to face our trials and testings alone, but if we recognize God as our Father and Comforter are we not helped to walk more perfectly in His statutes? Even if at times it seems a lonely road, it is one that we must keep to, unwavering in our determination to reach the end. How and why was God such a help to Elijah in his solitary life? If we go to the record in James 5 we are helped to see an important aspect contained in his life:

"Confess your faults one to another and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." (16-18)

The fact that the scriptures record Elijah as a man who prayed earnestly sets him apart as one who looked to God for help and strength, and isn't this what we must do likewise if we are to be truly led? Elijah's mission was to turn the rebellious house of Israel back to God — a hard task, and how much prayer and supplication, seeking God's guidance must have gone into this work.

We remember when he confronted the prophets of Baal and exposed them and their god as imposters, a very dramatic witness to the power of God and His prophet. As the prophets of Baal attempted to sacrifice, nothing happened; yet, when Elijah prepared the altar, three times they filled four barrels of water and poured them on the sacrifice. Remembering there had been no rain, water was in great scarcity. Elijah would appear to some, odd in what he was endeavouring to do. Onlookers would wonder how he could possibly think of wasting such a precious store of water. Yet it is recorded:

"And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah, the prophet, came near, and

said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant and that I have done all these things at thy word.

(1 Kings 18:36)

and verse 38:

“Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces, and they said. The Lord he is God; the Lord, he is God. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baaal; let not one of them escape. And they took them. And Elijah brought them down to the brook, Kishon, and slew them there.”

Do we see how dramatically Elijah was helped by God and through the power of God working with him, was able to turn the people back to serving God.

We perhaps at times fail to turn to God as readily as we should. We often think our circumstances are to work out according to our own plans. Yet, must we not put our reliance in God and endeavour to obey Him? Elijah came to know that power that would work on his behalf, if in earnest prayer he looked to God for help. He put his confidence and trust in God when fed by the ravens. And likewise, when the brook had dried up, he was led to the widow woman where the meal and oil in the barrel served to sustain, showing both Elijah and the woman that God was truly with them as their means of sustenance and life.

When the widow's child died it was a further test of Elijah's belief to see if he would again turn to God. Three times he approached God in prayer:

“And he cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?

And he stretched himself upon the child **three times and** cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah: and the soul of the child came into him again and he revived.” 1 Kings 17:20-22.

This circumstance may have come to show Elijah how God's power needed to be entreated, the need for importunity of one coming to God in prayer, supplicating earnestly never doubting. And the woman's response was:

"Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." verse 24

Was this not God's desire in using Elijah, to show that the Lord God of Israel was indeed the only source of Truth? His word would mean life and sustenance,, but turning from that way would bring destruction and wrath upon those that rebelled.

Elijah's tests were not over yet, many others came to try him and his faith in God. This is required of us as well, a constant testing, going from strength to strength, having faith believing God is leading us and that He will show us what is required.

When we go to Luke 1, speaking of John the Baptist, we are helped to see the fulfillment of Elijah in John:

"And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." verses 16-17

How much is revealed and help given in Elijah's example. We too must turn to God in earnest prayer in our circumstances and trials. If we can, in faith believing, God will show Himself strong on our behalf so that in echoing Elijah's name, we too can say, "My God is Jehovah of Whom is Salvation."

M.C.S.

“Lesson from the genealogies”

The chapter of 1 Chronicles 6 may be, for the most part, a series of names and genealogies, but it is part of the divine record, and so has been preserved for a purpose and for a help.

“And these are they whom David set over the service of song in the house of the Lord, after that the ark had rest. And they ministered before the dwelling place of the tabernacle of the congregation with singing, until Solomon had built the house of the Lord in Jerusalem: and then they waited on their office according to their order.

And these are they that waited with their children. Of the sons of the Kohathites: Heman a singer, the son of Joel, the son of Shemuel.” (1 Chron. 6:31-33)

Heman “waited”, or as it is in the Hebrew, (see the margin reference), “stood” with his children. What did he stand for? Why, to stand for, and to praise, the truth of the Most High God. Yes, he stood as all are required to do in the metaphorical sense; to direct his children, of whom he was the leader, in an acceptable acclaim and reverence to the God of Israel. Heman can have his name translated as “Amen”, and that word means faithful and true.

With such an example therefore as typified from the past, can we “stand” also and follow in our inward spiritual melody, that which is faithful and true? But Heman had a brother to help him. One who stood at his right hand.

“And his brother Asaph, who stood on his right hand, even Asaph the son of Berachia, the son of Shimea.” (1 Chron. 6:39)

If Asaph was standing at his right hand, he was there to give support to the one “who waited”, and who was “the Amen”. We cannot help but think of the description of Christ:-

“And unto the angel of the ecclesia of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.”

(Rev. 3:14)

THE REMNANT

So in Heman we have a type, and in Asaph supporting him by standing at his right hand, we have an exhortation for ourselves. Are we standing with Christ?

The meaning of the name Asaph has its significance, "The Gatherer". If we would emulate the type, we are "to gather", pull together; bring together into one. The opposite untoward spirit would be "to scatter"; and therefore a fractious temperament is not a gatherer. We think again of the words of Christ:-

"He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." (Matt. 12:30)

Also there is another passage where this definition is used:-

"He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

(Luke 11:23-26)

These words of Christ are very striking. If we fail in our opportunity of gathering with Christ, leaving only an empty situation, then such a lost opportunity can only result in a worse condition than any former condition we were taken from when the hand of God worked through His Son to bring upon us a cleansing effect. To fail to take advantage of the rest which is proffered and is always given to those who truly accept what is offered means ultimately a seven fold worse state of affairs. But to go back to the record in Chronicles once more, we see other helpers referred to:-

"And their brethren the sons of Merari stood on the left hand:

Ethan the son of Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch" (1 Chron. 6:44)

The one named Ethan is also called Jeduthun. Jeduthun means laudatory, i.e. expressing praise. This name is derived from Yadah which has a meaning "to revere or worship, with extended hands," or to "wring the hands," which would mean to bemoan, confess, and so thereby honour and praise the One before whom the confession is made.

Such thoughts prompt us to look at Psalm 39, the heading of which is:-

"To the one who overcomes, even to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David"

We note the following verses under the caption:-

"I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.

I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred.

My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue.

Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.

Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity." (Psalm 39:1-5)

The spirit of these words is a beseeching one; a submissive one. Then we note the reaching out for forgiveness:-

"Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish.

"I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it.

Remove thy stroke away from me: I am consumed by the blow of thine hand.

When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more." (Psalm 39:8-13)

Such a mind as portrayed in these words is surely an exhortation for us to endeavour to follow. With ones such as this upon the left hand of Heman, "the Amen", what unity, harmony, and rightness of attitude and spirit is promoted. There is no specific house of God made with prepared stones in this day and age. But nevertheless the House of God exists, made up of living stones, gathered together through the pulling, gathering, and helping of those who stand at the side of Christ, and with Christ, even as Asaph stood on the right hand of Heman, "the Amen".

But there were others also helping as we can see:-

"Their brethren also the Levites were appointed unto all manner of service of the tabernacle of the house of God."

(1 Chron. 6:48)

The Levites, i.e. "joined", were together in the work of the House of God. So again there is this type from the past as an exhortation for us. It is a sign post of how we are to be in the House of God.

Societies, where disharmony is allowed to prevail, cannot be rendering praise to the Most High.

May we be helped to follow the instruction preserved in the ancient record, which though containing many names, has been kept for the purpose of exhorting and helping us in these times.



“Remember the Sabbath Day”

“And Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said unto them. These are the words which the Lord hath commanded, that ye should do them.

Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be a rest to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the Lord, whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day.” Ex. 35:1-3

Can we picture Moses, that man of God as he carefully carried out divine instruction. How careful was he to remind God’s people regarding the Sabbath.

Why?

Was it not to show that the mind of every one of God’s children had to be fixed on the Sabbath, pointing forward to the sabbath that remaineth for the children of God.

The truth of this is seen in the record in Numbers, ch 15 15: 32-35.

“And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day.

And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation.

And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him.

And the Lord said unto Moses, the man shall be surely put to death.”

When we consider that this man could have gathered sticks on any other day and been blameless, does it not show at once how God looks upon His children’s recognition of His purpose regarding the Sabbath?

The plain truth regarding the man who violated God’s command and regarding the Sabbath was seen in the man’s neglect to discern and to appreciate what it meant — he failed to see the Sabbath that remaineth for the children of God.

And so Moses gave God's instruction to the people to the end that they might enjoy at that time the seventh day — a day of rest — a day set apart wherein every man might lay aside his daily toil and rest —certainly a great blessing from an all wise God.

Six days shall work be done — the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the Lord. Whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death."

Six days shalt thou work. (A type of a greater work of preparing for the greater Sabbath during six milleniums).

Further to the above we read — that God required in addition to their daily tasks between the sabbaths of preparing for the necessities of each full week, a certain work of His people and that it had to be undertaken with a willing heart and not half-heartedly or with misgivings. Let us then the more particularly consider this special work, it is recorded . . .

"Take ye from among you an offering to the Lord; whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the Lord, gold, and silver, and brass." Ex. 35:5.

In verse 21 we read of the response,

"And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments.

And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold, and every man that offered an offering of gold unto the Lord." v. 22.

Further we are told.

"And Moses said unto the children of Israel. See, the Lord hath called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur of the tribe of Judah;

And he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship." vv. 30-31.

Chapter 36:1-2.

“Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man in whom the Lord put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the Lord had commanded.

And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom, even every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it.”

Can we fail to see the message of the Spirit preserved for us even to this day in the details given concerning God's requirement at that time. When God requires a work to be done He gives the ability to do it, and can we not see the truth of the statement, “I will put upon you no greater burden than you can bear.”

Surely it cannot be without significance that God chose those two men, Bezaleel and Aholiab to tell us a wonderful truth concealed in these two names —

Bezaleel — Yah is protector.

Aholiab — Fathers' tent, dwelling.

Surely telling us that whilst His dwelling is in process of building during the six days He will protect.

How wonderful to perceive that God is building a spiritual house for Himself and His Son — that He will provide everything necessary and that He will protect whilst the dwelling is in building.

And how sobering to reflect in verse 7:

“For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.”

Warning us that if we do not conform willingly to this great calling we shall be replaced.

David rejoiced in the work he had to perform and did so willingly.

“O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord all the earth.

Sing unto the Lord, bless His name show forth His salvation from day to day." Psalm 96 1-2.

"Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name bring an offering and come into His courts.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before Him, all the earth." vv. 8 and 9.

Holiness, a word which means separation.

The children of Israel did not realise that their separation during the wilderness journey was a great blessing, for the wilderness was a place of safety, for had they not remained (holy) they would have become embroiled with the nations, which would have brought disaster.

"Today if ye will hear His voice."

It is easy to say the words of Psalm 95:7.

"For He is our God: and we are the people of his pasture." But we are His people only if we take heed to His voice, and how much easier it is if we have the sabbath in view, remembering that the acceptable working for God in those things placed upon His people during the six days of building up His tabernacle (Spiritual House) will result in the enjoying of the fruits of that work on the Sabbath, in the peaceful contemplations of the millenium of rest that yet remains for the people of God, in which there will be no distractions of the present to mar.

Even as under the Law the mundane things were prevented from entering in upon the blessing of the Seventh Day.

J.S.

The Signs of His Coming and of the End of the World.

"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."
(Luke 21:28)

What love and kindness is shown in these words. The world is dark, and become a terrible place, where violence continually threatens. Jesus was mindful of how his brethren would feel as the end of the present order approaches. Hence His words to encourage, when His brethren might otherwise feel overwhelmed at the state of things. Remember, when you feel downcast, at what has come, or is coming to pass, that redemption for all the people of God is approaching, so "lift up your heads."

But the world cannot lift up its head, because it does not realise or believe in what has been so clearly laid upon record. Hence the recent warnings of Britain's church leaders that full-scale nuclear war was unwinnable and there should be an end to talk which made it seem "anything other than madness." That a nuclear disaster could ravage the Earth and make it uninhabitable. "Even multilateral disarmament on the part of the Great Powers, desirable though that would be, would not remove the threat altogether. There is no possibility of dismantling the research laboratories of the world, no infallible method of preventing the use of a nuclear warhead by some unscrupulous dictator or a terrorist organisation. The threat of universal disaster is with us for ever."

The leader of Britain's Parliamentary opposition has pledged his support for the campaign taking place against the placing in Britain of American nuclear missiles. These unilateralists, as they are called, comprise in some incidents bands of determined women, some of whom have been encamped at Greenham Common, one of the sites being prepared for the American weapons. Something similar has been taking place in West Germany; and also in Italy, where a march of protest has taken place to the little Sicilian town of Comiso against the plan to place American Cruise and Pershing missiles there; en route this throng arranged to stop at Signonella, which is used as a base for the United States Air Force.

Meanwhile underground nuclear test explosions keep taking place. In 1982 the United States announced eighteen underground tests, and towards the end of December the Swedish Seismol-

ogical Institute noted yet another explosion from the Semipalatinsk nuclear test area in Siberia, this was apparently the Russian's sixth underground test during the year. There has been a tendency in the West to decry Russia's economic stability but recently the American Central Intelligence Agency warned that it is far-fetched to regard the Soviet economy as "on the verge of collapse". The Soviet Union has experienced steady economic development and improving standards of living over the past thirty years despite continuing problems.

So testings, which mean experiments to improve effectiveness continue. But even in Canada there has been protest against the Government for allowing the United States to test Cruise missiles in Western Canada, in Northern Alberta, where the climate and vast stretches of flat terrain are similar to conditions in the Soviet Union. People have been camping near the entrance to the weapons site, two hundred and seventy miles north-east of Edmonton.

In vain does the mass media propaganda say:-

" — — — that what has been discovered cannot be undiscovered, that Christians must learn to live with the threat of universal nuclear disaster, and that the Church's first duty is to conquer fear, not surrender to it."

People are unhappy at the prospect not only for themselves, but also for their children.

But alas, Church leaders, and people alike overlook what is so certain of fulfilment.

" — — — look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

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.

The death of our brother, Samuel Lancaster brings a feeling of loss to all His house, yet we know that he sleeps waiting the call to judgment and having the hope of life when Jesus returns.

As we look back on 1982 we reflect upon how many circumstances have been allowed in our lives — to bring joy, sadness, hope and correction. Though, in the knowledge that all is under God's control we do not know what 1983 may bring, we look for the soon return of the Lord Jesus. Will He come in this new year? Only God knows and we wait, praying for help to be watching faithfully.

Continued contact with Christadelphians and others encourages in the work given.

J. A. DeF.

“PENTRIP” Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread: Sundays 11.30 a.m.

Bible Class: Midweek:

Though it has been a quiet time here we have the help of the magazines giving much food for thought.

There has been much to be grateful for all we have received, and hope our continuing endeavour to witness may cause more interest in these parts. Maybe we shall see if there is any effect before long.

per D.L.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, Manchester.

Breaking of Bread: Sundays 11.30 a.m.

Bible Class: Thursdays 7.30 p.m.

As the days continue we still have opportunity to witness. How precious is the truth for in a difficult time as the end approaches the necessary comfort and guidance is given, when otherwise the future would be without hope.