

**MARCH 1983**

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 that ye be not deceived”**

---

**“AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD”**

**“I WILL CAUSE YOU TO PASS UNDER THE ROD...”**

**“FAITH”**

**“TRIALS AT MARAH AND SINAI”**

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

**“NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS”**

---

**All Communications**

Butterfield  
15 Shrigley Rd. North  
Higher Poynton  
Cheshire  
SK12 1TE

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

---

## AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

“I WILL CAUSE YOU TO PASS UNDER THE ROD . . .”

**H**ow striking are the words of Ezekiel to his brethren of the captivity in Babylon. He spoke after the first captivity of Jerusalem, about 606 B.C. and before its final captivity in 588 B.C. It was a most difficult time for Ezekiel, a sad time as he learned of God's judgment upon Jerusalem and as he witnessed the failure of those already in captivity to submit to His hand. In Ezekiel 20, we have seen how certain of the elders of Israel came to the prophet there in Babylon, seeking his intervention on their behalf, that he should enquire of the Lord for them. God **refused** to be enquired of because of their evil ways. Through Ezekiel, He reminded them how their fathers had refused to hear His word and keep His covenant — in Egypt — in the wilderness — and now they were doing the same while captive in Babylon. Yet the Almighty in His mercy showed these elders who failed to honor Him that he **was** long-suffering and merciful. He promised that in a time yet to come and for His Name's sake, He would gather His people Israel out of all nations, would bring them into the wilderness, and there, God said:

“I (will) plead with you face to face.” Ezekiel 20:35.

To **plead** is the Hebrew word “**shaphat**” meaning to judge, to reason, to contend. God has always reasoned and contended with His people to strengthen, to encourage, and to direct them in His way. In fact, the last words of the Old Testament speak of His future purpose with Israel:

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:  
And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children,  
and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come  
and smite the earth with a curse.”

Malachi 4:5-6.

God will use Elijah to plead with His people, Israel, before the great and dreadful day of His judgments. He desires to turn them back to Him, and that they may “look on him whom they pierced,” (John 19:37) recognizing Him at last as their Messiah, God's Son promised from the beginning.

Today the Father in His mercy continues to plead with those who are striving to be His people. He has in that mercy taken a few out of the world, delivered from the nations unto a hope — **Israel's hope**. In what way does He plead even now — and how will He plead through Elijah in the day soon to come upon the earth?

Ezekiel 20:37 helps us to discern:

“ . . . I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant:”

What is meant by “passing under the rod”? There are several instances in His Word which can be of help in this question. In Leviticus 27:32, we read God’s law, given on Sinai, which was to be a schoolmaster to lead to Christ:

“ . . . Concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of **whatsoever passeth under the rod**, the tenth shall

be holy unto the Lord.”

**To pass under the rod** would seem to involve a numbering or counting of those that belonged to the shepherd. Jeremiah helps us also when he speaks of God’s promise concerning Jerusalem and Judah:

“ . . . Again in this place, which is desolate without man and without beast, . . . shall be an habitation of shepherds causing their flocks to lie down . . . the flocks (shall) pass again under the hands of him that telleth them, saith the Lord.”  
Jeremiah 33:12-13

And further in verses 14-16, the Lord continued:

“ . . . I will perform that good thing which I have promised . . . In those days . . . will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land . . . Judah . . . and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness.”

**“ALL THAT THE LORD HATH SAID . . . ”**

In that great day for which we long, God’s righteousness will be seen in the rule of Jesus Christ with His saints; the fulfillment of the promises made to Adam, to Noah, to Abraham, to David, and to all who have responded to the Almighty’s call, saying in their hearts, as did faithful Israel:

“ . . . All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient.”  
Exodus 24:7

Are not all whose hearts respond to this way declaring that they want to be brought into that precious bond of His covenant? God in His righteousness will grant a place in His kingdom to those who have valued that covenant, and who have struggled to keep their part of it. They will have laboured and hoped to be counted as belonging to the Shepherd, passing under His rod, enduring

and growing under His careful scrutiny, counted forever as His, sheep of His pasture. Can we see, then, Brethren and Sisters what God had in mind as He spoke through Ezekiel?

“ . . . I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant:”

**“THE LORD . . . MY SHEPHERD . . . ”**

But there is much more indeed required in becoming His sheep; more than simply being counted. **Passing under the rod** involves a chastening, a submitting, a seeking. In Psalm 23, we perceive the mind of David, of the Lord Jesus as well; and, of all who are determined to be sheep whom the Shepherd knows by name. David said,

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want . . .  
I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; . . .”

Verses 1-4

**“Thou art with me . . .”** — is this not a keen awareness of the bond of the covenant?

David continues:

“ . . . **Thy** rod and thy staff they comfort me.”

For what does the shepherd use his rod or his staff? **It is** to count his sheep; but, also to retrieve from danger, to gently guide, to protect from harm. This rod or staff can bring comfort and protection to us all; but, only in the hand of the perfect Shepherd, and only as we keep close to and seek to be His.

**THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

When we think of a shepherd, our minds go to the Lord Jesus who said:

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”  
John 10:11

Is it not this important fact that makes it possible to be bound in the covenant — the life of the Shepherd given for His sheep? In bringing them under that rod, the good shepherd knows his sheep by name. John 10:3 tells us:

“ . . . the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.”

Does this not confirm the words of God through Isaiah?

“ . . . Thus saith the Lord . . . Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.”  
Isaiah 43:1

How well a faithful shepherd knows his sheep, each one by name, and more; by all the characteristics of each: its weaknesses its strengths, its tendencies.

He knows what best to do to protect, to feed, to heal, and to teach. What a great blessing and wonder that Jesus — that our Father — knows each of us in this wonderful and complete way! So we may be permitted to grow and prosper, and thereby to please Him.

We listen again to Jesus' words:

“I am the good shepherd, and **know my sheep, and am known of mine.**”  
John 10:14

How do His sheep know Him? In their simple and willing submission, His children find He is ever there in all their trials, failures, and needs. They recognize their Lord as the One with the rod and staff; the One who feeds as they hunger for righteousness; who corrects as they stumble, who brings them to refreshing water in their weariness; who is their Comforter in sorrow, their leader in perplexity. As the sheep of His flock, Brethren and Sisters, how grateful we should feel for the covering of His rod and to be counted by Him in the bond of the covenant. Through this we are looking to the day when the Lord Jesus will return to make His people — His sheep — kings and priests with Him in His Kingdom.

**“ . . . THE SCEPTRE SHALL NOT DEPART FROM JUDAH . . . ”**

The thought of **passing under the rod** was very meaningful to our brethren of old. In the case of Jacob, he was moved by the Spirit to bless his children:

“ . . . Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.”  
Genesis 49:1

Unto Judah he said:

“The sceptre (rod) shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.  
verse 10.

This is yet to be the work of Christ, a final bringing under His rod, His sceptre, of those who will be His; those who in that day will be united under Him in that perfect and glorious sovereignty.

Such are those of whom Jesus spoke as having their "names written in heaven." These are they whom He will know by name because they have truly loved and known their Shepherd.

David's name was known in heaven for he was subject to that rod and loved by God. Because of his spirit, he was promised a seed, a house, a kingdom, and a throne everlasting. He wrote:

"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; the **sceptre** of thy kingdom is a right sceptre." Psalm 45:6

That sceptre is indeed a rod of righteousness, for it is the sceptre of Yahweh our righteousness, who will rule in righteousness and judgment for ever. This, Brethren and Sisters, is our hope; the goal toward which we struggle; the sustaining of all our present efforts. Can we continue to work and to hope, strong in His promise? The words of Paul can help us as he wrote of Jesus:

"Wherefore Jesus also . . . suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come." Hebrews 13:12-14.

Bearing his reproach, suffering for His Name's sake, putting away the often yearnings of the flesh — is this part of **passing under the rod**, being known of Him, cared for and blessed as His sheep? David believed these promises, looked for the kingdom to be brought about by the One with the sceptre. Going back to his thoughts of the Messiah in Psalm 45, he continues:

"Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Verse 7.

Jesus, able to overrule His flesh, now is with His Father making ready a people who hope to be bound eternally in the bonds of His covenant. David, the shepherd who became a king — the man after God's own heart — rejoiced in faith:

". . . Of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count (cause to pass under the rod),

when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah." Psalm 87:5-6

Let us share our brother's faith and determination, and never lose sight of the One who is our Shepherd.

**J.A.DeF.**

## FAITH

**T**he words recorded in Hebrews chapter 11 we know speak to us of faith; they speak in great detail and by example of the faith of those who relied on God, looked to Him for help and strength, and through faith and patience endured through their probation.

When reading these words we are reminded of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and all of the others listed here (in verses 33-37) who:

“through faith, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

Women received their dead raised to life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection:

And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment;

They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tested, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented.”

We may wonder how we can possibly compare ourselves to the great faith and strength illustrated by these verses in Hebrews, yet as we read in verses 39-40:

“And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.”

Do we perceive here the great hope of salvation we have, that we can share this hope with the faithful of old; those who are now waiting to arise from the dust of the ground to receive the promise of everlasting life? Can we perhaps see how this chapter regarding faith, points out the necessity to display that faith in whatever circumstances we find ourselves?

Perhaps we can examine faith then, because its importance is so carefully delineated here in Hebrews for us. We know from the first verse of that eleventh chapter of Hebrews what faith is:

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”.

## THE REMNANT

---

The word substance we find means to be confident, anticipate; while the word evidence means full persuasion. So that we could now re-read this verse as:

“Now faith is the confident anticipation of things hoped for, the full persuasion of things not seen.”

Can we fully understand the meaning of faith? It is an anticipation of something to come, and not only an anticipation but a full persuasion that it **will** come to pass. We might ask, how do we acquire faith? We are helped in this regard by Romans 10:17

“So, then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”.

This puts into proper perspective what faith is and how faith is to be acquired — through the Word of God. For without the Word there cannot be faith; and without faith there will be no anticipation of what is hoped for.

Perhaps this is exemplified by the example of the Lord Jesus, who we know when He was tested after His baptism relied on the strength of “It is written . . .” — the Word of God. He revealed His faith in God and so through that Word the Lord Jesus was able to elevate the spirit man and crush the flesh within Him. Because of His reliance on that Word, His faith was strengthened, so much so that it would not fail Him all during His probation.

Perhaps to cite Abraham as an example might be helpful. In Romans 4 we read:

“He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God.

And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him,

But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus, our Lord, from the dead.”

(verses 20-24)

Do we see here that if we believe in God, that it can be imputed to us likewise? But in order to believe we must know His Word. Abraham staggered not, but had faith — was fully persuaded by that Word of God which came unto him, and in time was justified by that faith. We are not dealt with exactly as those of old, but we are tested to see if we are persuaded, if we believe in the hope held out to us. So we can see how indispensable is our



time of probation, a time of testing to see if we will believe in God's Word and allow it to work in us and move us in the ways of God.

How often we say we look for God's help and indication in our living, but what is our response to that direction? If we can respond, it can be accounted to us as faithfulness — a trial overcome, a test passed. If we can do this, showing faith, then God too, will be faithful concerning His promises. It all depends upon our faith. We are helped to relate this idea to ourselves in I Peter 1:5 speaking of the children of God:

"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

We can be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, through our faith in the hope that is held out, God will be with us to guide and direct. Continuing in verses 6 and 7 . . .

"Wherein ye greatly rejoice though now for a season if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

This is what the trial of our faith is to be — more precious than gold; but in order to attain this perfection, we must perceive what the trials are to work in us. We can count on the continuation of our trials, just as the faithful of old were tried and tested who obtained a good report . . . "For by it the elders obtained a good report".

The need for faith is vital and we should look upon it as a precious quality much to be sought after. This is perhaps brought out by David when we go to Psalm 57, where the title translates as:

"To the Victor, I pray do not destroy, the pure gold-like faith of David, when he fled from Saul in the cave."

David's confidence and persuasion was as the second verse reveals:

"I will cry unto God most high: unto God that performeth all things for me."

David was being put to the test to see if his faith and confidence in God was sufficient during this conflict with Saul. We know God heard David's prayer and his faith was strengthened through this ordeal:

"My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed:  
I will sing and give praise." (verse 7)

His heart was fixed and could not be moved. His desire was to follow God's direction, to be led and reveal to God that he did have faith and confidence in God's Word. These were works, works that David performed to illustrate his faith in God, and works which all of the faithful have performed:

... "Faith if it hath not works is dead, being alone."  
(James 2:17)

Faith and works to prove that faith, work hand in hand to reveal what is truly in the heart. James in chapter 2 clearly points this out:

"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble.  
But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?  
Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?  
Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?  
And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.  
Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

Do we see likewise that works are what prove the faith — the works reveal to God a desire to move according to that hope to see if we will believe even as Abraham and David. Also in Hebrews 11:6 we are told:

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Doesn't this put the hope before us in proper perspective? In seeking Him, we must emulate what is recorded in this eleventh chapter of Hebrews, that faith and works are required in order to please Him.

**M.C.S.**

### TRIALS AT MARAH AND SINAI

**U**ndoubtedly when Israel were a nation of slaves in bondage to the Egyptians, they were under great trial. Then they escaped, due to God's kindness and help.

Now we have to learn that when **we** have been helped and delivered by God, as they were, this is not, and never has been an end of trial and difficulty. That would never do in the purpose of God to those whom He would deliver.

“And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.

And the people murmured against Moses, saying, what shall we drink ?  
(Exodus 15:23-24)

The question in such a climate, with the sun scorching the desert sand “What shall we drink?” was reasonable, but the murmuring was not! They were too hasty in their murmuring. If they had not been helped by God through Moses they would already have been dead. Why then did they not exercise some patience to wait and see what would happen. But human nature is not only forgetful of help received, it is also hasty.

*Moses in his distress at their complaints cried to God.*

“And he cried unto the Lord: and the Lord shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them.

And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.”  
(verses 25-26)

Yes, it is better to hesitate and show care, even though in difficulty. It seemed impossible; they were in a desert with undrinkable water.

But the solution was a very simple one, if only they had waited. There was a tree growing that would alkalise the acidity of the water. They had not perceived this. Moses had not either. But God showed him.

Now it is the same with ourselves. God knows the answer to whatever difficulty. We need to learn to wait for His help and not be hasty.

When God shows the solution to a problem **we** need to learn and remember as a result, that **we really are** dependent upon Him. We continually need to know His answer to our problems as we leave Egypt and seek His promised land.

This is indeed a statute, a requirement of us, to keep God and His help in our thoughts. It is how we are proved. If we fail and murmur, it is because we are faltering in our understanding and faith in Him, that He knows what is best, and will find an answer to what may appear to be an insurmountable problem, providing we are patient, and wait for His help.

How assuring was the promise to Israel, that by obedience, God would keep them from the diseases of Egypt (i.e. keep them from those things which comprised the ten plagues which overthrew the might of Egypt).

So it will be in future to those who obey; they will not have the seven last plagues visited upon them.

In conclusion we read:-

“And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and three-score and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters.” (verse 27)

Elim — a place of relief. Yes, God is kind. He does not allow it to be hard all the time. There are Elims, strengthenings in the journey to the promised land, even as Israel were taught in those days of old.

### **THE THRESHING FLOOR (From the readings of the day)**

**A**s we look at our first reading we can see a servant of God, who was greatly impressed at a time of shaking and devastation.

“Then David said, This is the house of the Lord God, and this is the altar of the burnt offering for Israel.”

(1 Chron. 22:1)

David had been greatly afraid at the situation that had overtaken Israel and himself at a time of transgression and failure.

“At that time when David saw that the Lord had answered him in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there.

For the tabernacle of the Lord, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt offering, were at that season in the high place at Gibeon.

But David could not go before it to inquire of God: for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the Lord.”

(1 Chron. 21:28-30)

Seventy-thousand men had fallen. Seventy-thousand men had been removed because they had fallen! David desired to take all the blame.

"And David said unto God, is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O Lord my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued."

(1 Chron. 21:17)

But God is just. David had erred, yes; but these had fallen as a result of not being in favour with God.

In these present times also, we think of many who have fallen. It is true that some in position have fallen short and erred in one way or another. But have all those who have fallen away fallen because of the mistakes and the erring of those who should have led them more carefully? Surely not!

At the time of David, the people were plagued. In these last days the house of God has also been plagued. But David, in his fear was shown the solution, even as in these last days a similar solution is awaiting those who fear God. David was told:

"Then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the Lord in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite."

(verse 18)

What an unlikely place for the altar, which would be a place of worship. But God knows what is best: He chooses where service to Him should be made. So in the threshing floor David quickly built up the altar (which typified He who was to come as altar and offering) to stay the righteous judgment of God through God's pity and mercy. As a result we read:

"And David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the Lord; and he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering.

And the Lord commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof."

(verses 26-27)

So mercy was shown by the Most High who accepted what He had instructed His servant to prepare and uphold; to worship and plead thereby.

Let us turn this lesson to ourselves. We have an altar and a sacrifice. The place where we meet may seem unusual, perhaps obscure. Remember, God has chosen it! For He is in all the affairs of His House. It may be a metaphorical threshing floor where there has been a buffeting and a blowing to and fro. But that is the condition where the chaff is separated from the wheat. Such is the place where God will accept the worship concerning His altar and His sacrifice, which as we know is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let it be a threshing floor! What does it matter if God will accept the worship and pleading of His people through the sacrifice He has instructed them to look to in such a place? Indeed, it is the only place, as God showed to David, where the plague can be stayed.

Let us determine then, as David determined in his clear conviction:

“Then David said, This is the house of the Lord God, and this is the altar of the burnt offering for Israel.”

( Chron. 22:1)

We move on now, and read certain features concerning God’s House.

“And there was an enlarging, and a winding about still upward to the side chambers: for the winding about of the house went still upward round about the house: therefore the breadth of the house was still upward, and so increased from the lowest chamber to the highest by the midst.”

(Ezekiel 41:7)

“The winding — — went still upward round about the house.” Ah! there are times when in the work of The House there is a “winding” feature that seems to take us around and around. But it is a feature of The House, remember, says the Spirit. It is wholly appropriate, providing it is a feature that is leading ever upward. If the work winds about, yet leads upward, it is the work of the Spirit, and is to be feared and respected.

We think of the testimony of John Baptist in our third reading.

“John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.”

(John 3:27)

Anything else that may appear to be received, if it is not from heaven, it is nothing. Again John continues:

“He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.”

(verse 31)

We **would** naturally speak earthly things, according to our earthly abilities. But that is no use. What good is a house where this situation operates if God is not in it?! Let us conclude this consideration with the words:

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

(verse 36)

Let us build in the “threshing floor”; otherwise if we do not recognise Christ in this way, the wrath of God abideth on us, as it would have done in those days of old if David had not responded in the threshing floor.



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

"When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer.

(Prov. 1:27-28)

"Behold — — — not of the Lord of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire — — —.  
For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord — — —."

(Habakkuk 2:13-14)

The above words of the Spirit of the Most High show God's mind. The fear which grips the world will make the nations desolate. Destruction will come as a whirlwind; but it will be too late then for men to expect God to extricate those who have been heedless. But His earth will be ultimately preserved. The only hope for this wonderful creation is God's sublime and all-powerful ultimate arbitration, which will be perfectly just.

An example of the fruit of man's way is seen at the present time in the Missouri town of Times Beach, near St. Louis. One of the most toxic of man-made substances has been found in the area. It is the chemical Dioxin, and only one part per billion is the maximum safe amount for humans. The chemical was discovered at the end of last year, just before floods inundated the town. It appeared that a private contractor had used waste oil containing this substance to spray dirt roads around Times Beach as a means of dust control. The December flooding washed it from the soil, which had been found to contain up to one hundred and thirty parts per billion. Federal health authorities felt the hazard was real enough to warrant the immediate evacuation of the town. It is reminiscent of the Seveso explosion in Italy in 1976, when dioxin was scattered over a wide area, from a chemical factory. Some of the affected areas there are still sealed off, because this substance causes cancer, pregnancy disorders, diseases of the nervous system, bladder, kidney and liver complaints.

Meanwhile the debate continues on the matter of Britain withdrawing nuclear weapons from its arsenal. Many Anglican Churchmen want Britain to renounce these vile devices. The report which the Church produced entitled "The Church and the Bomb" has been vigorously debated.



Ten leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church and other Russian Churches, have visited Britain, stressing they were not connected with any Soviet propaganda exercise. Unilateral disarmament on the part of Great Britain would find a Soviet response they said. The delegation included representatives of the Georgian Orthodox Church, the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Lutheran Churches of Latvia and Estonia and the officially registered Baptist Union, and also a Roman Catholic priest.

When the visit concluded, a spokesman for the delegation said:

“We are satisfied with the outcome of our visit.”

“We had numerous contacts with Church leaders and with the clergy.

In matters of peace, we also found a good deal of common ground and found unity of opinion in that the churches can make a valuable contribution to reinforcing peace in our time.”

But can they? The British Government continues to prepare sites for nuclear missiles.

The British Medical profession has voiced concern at one of its conferences. It was said that many injured survivors of a nuclear attack would have to be put aside to die because of the sheer number of casualties involved, and certain injuries that could be treated easily in hospital in peace time would have to go unattended because of lack of facilities. Emergency services would face enormous problems after a nuclear attack. The Government's scenario for its “Hard Rock” nuclear defence exercise was unrealistic. Government pamphlets were under-estimating the effects of a nuclear strike on public services in the official leaflet “Protect and Survive.”

So, fears are voiced, and where will it end? Men cannot extricate themselves. Their fear will ‘come as desolation’, and they will ‘labour in the very fire’. Yet God can and will control the future. “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.”

**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,  
Buffalo.

Alternate Week: Revelation Study.

Encouragement is felt at the continued interest of one seeking  
His way to life.

Inquiries and contacts continue, bringing gratitude for the  
privilege of casting bread upon the waters.

The continued, worsening economic problems and the seeming  
inability to find solutions make us realize that the only real solution  
involves the coming of the Lord Jesus to establish God's order  
upon this troubled earth.

**J.A.DeF.**

**"PENTRIP" Black Rock, Portmadoc.**

Breaking of Bread: Sundays 11.30 a.m.

Bible Class: Midweek:

In times of weakness it is a profound consolation to us to know  
that the prayers of our Brethren and Sisters are on our behalf  
as ours are for them.

As the days go by, more and more we are made aware that  
this is the time of trouble to come upon the world. How thankful  
we must be for the great privilege of being allowed to know  
God's purpose with the earth, and of the righteousness which  
is to come.

**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,  
Thursday evening.

In these times of difficulty we know that of ourselves we can  
do nothing. Therefore as the work proceeds and help is received  
to guide and instruct we are caused to marvel at His mindfulness  
in looking down upon a few to give what is necessary for their  
well being.

**Patience**

What a wonderful example of patience is exemplified for us in Job, the servant of God. We know that patience is not a quality which we possess by nature but is a quality of the Spirit. By nature we are impatient and quickly exasperated, especially when we think our wishes should be carried out immediately. We have to learn by experience, and not infrequently by bitter experience that patience is required of each of us.

How difficult yet how necessary is this exercise of patience! How at times we long to get away from the chastening which is so essential for our spiritual well being! How easily we become impatient! The apostle Paul warns us:—

**“For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God ye might receive the promise.”**

The apostle James adds:—

**“Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trial of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have its perfect work that ye may be perfect wanting nothing.”**

How delightful is the atmosphere in an ecclesia when everyone exercises this patience! How quickly differences between brethren can be settled if each will patiently consider and give weight to what is said by the others — “preferring one another in honour.” This is the way of the Spirit; it is when patience is **not** exercised that the wrong spirit is bound to be manifested. The apostle says that patience is the outcome of tribulation: that tribulation worketh patience.

**“And not only so, but we glory in tribulation also knowing that tribulation worketh patience” (Romans 5, v. 3).**

Surely Paul did not mean that he enjoyed tribulation, for this is grievous. No — he could see the end of tribulation, that it **worketh patience** — and patience experience and experience hope: the hope that Job had, the hope that John had, the hope of all the faithful. Such will endorse the appeal of the apostle James, **“Let patience have her perfect work.”**

**Patience — her perfect work**

**“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life.”**

Surely Job was one of those who endured temptation. He was tried, and that most severely, and it is evident that he did not find his tribulation pleasant at the time he actually experienced it.

What anguish he must have suffered on hearing that his servants had been slain with the edge of the sword, that his sheep had been burnt up, then that his camels had been carried away by robbers and finally that his sons and daughters had been slain by a great wind smiting the four corners of the house! Do we not marvel at his patient attitude as we hear his words:—

**“Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away blessed be the name of the Lord”?**

This was only the beginning, for we find greater tribulation was to come. We read of his being smitten with boils “from the sole of his foot unto his crown.” Again what patience as we listen to the reply to his wife:—

**“What, shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?”**

How many of us could have curbed our natural inclination to be impatient and exasperated as trial followed upon trial? Even then his tribulation was not over, for what sadness he must have felt on finding that those who should have been his friends were in reality his enemies. In addition what humiliation he must have suffered:—

**“They that are younger than I have me in derision . . . now am I their song, yea I am their byword” (Job 30, v.1).**

**“Blessed is the man that endureth.”** Job is held up before us as one who did endure, who in all his tribulation showed wonderful patience and forbearance, so much so that we find the apostle James writing:—

**“Behold we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job and have seen the end of the Lord that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy” (James 5, v. 11).**

The record of Job has been preserved for our benefit so that we might feel we can hardly endure any longer we can turn to Job and be encouraged by his wonderful example, remembering how he was brought through all his trials and received great blessings **after he had endured.**

### **The patience of John**

We have been reading also the Revelation given to our Brother John. When we look at the message given to him and realise that it came from the Lord Jesus Himself, then our tribulation seems but a light affliction. The glory of the Apocalypse was shown to John. The majesty, wisdom and beauty of the symbols used might suggest that John was then to be found in the midst of glory and splendour. Yet such was not the case. We find him instead an exile in Patmos, an outcast from the world. Because this was on account of the “word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ,” he declared to those to whom the message is sent, “I am your brother and companion in tribulation and in

the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." And so we listen, remembering that this message is from the Lord Jesus Himself for the apostle John and for his brethren and for no one else. These brethren are his companions, partakers with him in tribulation **which worketh patience**. How great then the honour, for later John sees all such entering the Kingdom and is told:—

**"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

### **The patience of Jesus Christ**

The Apostle John shows the divinely provided means whereby those who suffer tribulation may be granted entrance into the Kingdom — **through the patience of Jesus Christ**. The Lord Jesus learned obedience by the things which He suffered and endured, and it is this endurance that the apostle refers to as **patience**. By taking hold of His example and receiving strength thereby, we, His brethren and sisters may, like Him, "come out of great tribulation."

During our probation we must of necessity experience tribulation. Through it, indispensable instruction may be received, provided that careful attention is paid to the Word of God, so that the purpose of the trial may be discerned and the lesson learnt. It is well to remember, though, that of ourselves we could not endure — trials would soon defeat us. It is the patience of Jesus Christ which reveals to us a **power**, as well as knowledge. The Lord Jesus was of our nature, tempted in all points as are we. In His darkest hour, was He not ministered unto by the Father? This **power** which sustained the Lord Jesus is still available to us; the power of the Spirit has not diminished. His patience and endurance, in which we must be partakers, was strengthened by both knowledge of the Word and by the power and guidance of the Spirit. We therefore read:—

**"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered"** (Romans 8, v. 26).

Perceiving then the perfect work which patience wrought in Christ, we ought to rejoice in our own tribulations by realising that the same wisdom, power and love is available to us to complete the work already begun in us. We ought to be encouraged by remembering that John was transported in Spirit from the present tribulation to the future glory. How near must the Lord Jesus have been to him when he turned to face the voice behind him! How near is He to us now?

The assurance of the coming glory must have sustained John — does its reality and nearness sustain us? We have been called to a great calling — there is none greater. Let us then take to heart the exhortations:—

**"Ye have need of patience . . . for yet a little while and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."**

**"Let us run with patience the race which is set before us."**