

DECEMBER 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"

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

"NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS"

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AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

"NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH"

Isaiah was a prophet sent by God to Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. Those days were difficult ones, for Judah at times was oppressed by the enemies of Israel; permitted because they had turned away from their God to serve idols. Yet, when God became first in their heart, great help and deliverance was granted, as in the time of Hezekiah. It was during his reign that Jerusalem was threatened by the powerful army of Sennacherib, the King of Assyria. Because of faith and a turning to God on the part of Hezekiah and his people, Jerusalem was protected from destruction. Isaiah spoke God's words to the king in reassurance:

"Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it."
II Kings 19:32

This was contrary to all the fears of Jerusalem's people. Why was such help granted? It resulted from their calling upon God for deliverance, and waiting upon Him. We can understand the fears of those within the walls of Jerusalem, for the adversary was very strong. Don't we find, Brethren and Sisters, that we, too, face strong adversaries; different ones perhaps, but still to test our faith, our dependence upon a merciful Father? So we can enter as well into their joy and relief as deliverance came, and not so much as one arrow was directed against them as God had promised.

This deliverance for Jerusalem and Hezekiah occurred about 712 B.C. The portion we are reading today (Isaiah 64) is dated approximately 698 B.C., probably very shortly after Hezekiah's death and the beginning of the reign of Manasseh, his 12-year old son. He ruled for 55 years, an evil king, departing from the ways of his father. He and Israel with him worshipped idols, setting up groves and also in the house of God, false altars. What sorrow this idolatry would bring to the faithful such as Isaiah, who may have lived long enough to see this sad declension.

With this background, can we better understand Isaiah's mind, and God's word expressed through him to help us? In today's portion in Isaiah 64, we have listened to his cry:

“Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence, . . . to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!”

Isaiah 64:1-2.

How our brother longed for the Almighty’s promised cleansing of the earth, with the Messiah to accomplish His Father’s purpose; destroying that which was exalted (as the mountains), and confounding the enemies of God, that all nations might indeed tremble at His presence. How far from trembling were these nations in Isaiah’s time, even though the God of Israel had thwarted the great might of Sennacherib.

How far from trembling even Judah was at times during the witnessing of the prophet.

And how far from trembling is the world today as godlessness rules! Can we understand Isaiah’s crying out: “Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens . . . that the mountains might flow down?” Does not our brother’s plea echo the faithful cry of all ages, those under the altar?

“ . . . How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?”

Revelation 6:10.

Let us remember that those upon whom God is to avenge Himself are of His own creation; what sorrow it must bring to Him. We also remember that He on another occasion destroyed all His creatures by a flood, except faithful Noah and his family who were saved in the ark. There was in all the world only eight people who trusted, waiting upon God. To a lesser degree this sad process has been repeated through the history of God’s creation. Isaiah further speaks of this refusal to hear and to obey the Almighty:

“For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.”

Isaiah 64:4.

How tragically true, that man has never perceived the wonders that God has made ready for those who will wait on Him. We also, Brethren and Sisters, even striving and yearning as we do, fail to grasp the wonder of it.

PREPARED FOR THEM THAT LOVE . . . AND WAIT

Paul helps in our efforts to get hold of these marvelous promises:

“ . . . We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, . . . : which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared *for them that love him*.

But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”

I Corinthians 2:7-10

These things prepared *are* a mystery concealed from those who are ruled by love of self for the flesh cannot perceive this mystery. Indeed we are told that the Lord of glory was crucified by those who professed to know the Law, to honour God, to bow down before Him, but who failed to *perceive*.

Why couldn't they understand? Was it because as the last part of verse 9 tells us, these wonders are “prepared *for them that love him*”? In Isaiah, it is written “prepared for him that *waiteth for him*.”

In the eyes of the Spirit, it's all the same; those that *love Him*, *wait* on Him, and those who wait, manifest their love. To *wait* involves a tarrying, a longing. David helps us in this thought:

“Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; . . .

Our soul *waiteth* for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.”

Psalms 33:18-21.

Waiting on the Lord involves so much! Fear, hope, endurance in every circumstance, as there is a looking for His guidance and deliverance. Again David expresses for us:

“I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.”

Psalms 40:1-2.

This was David's experience and, too, that of the Lord Jesus'. Is it not in a measure ours as well? Each one has found remarkable deliverance when there has been a waiting, a quiet continuance in trial; deliverance from overwhelming circumstances, and with this, our feet set upon a rock, more firmly established. Shall we then more highly value this mercy, Brethren and Sisters, and learn to wait patiently on our God? By this, we will rejoice more completely in His provision, growing in fear, hope, trust, and love. And we shall, bit by bit, begin to perceive that God has indeed prepared wonderful things for His own.

“THE SPIRIT SEARCHETH ALL THINGS”

This hidden wisdom is revealed by God's Spirit which searcheth all things. Indeed, by that Spirit He looks into our hearts and reveals for us what needs to be changed. What is required of us to benefit by this searching? We find help on this question from Isaiah's words:

“ . . . Now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.”
Isaiah 64:8.

How does this reveal our need? Must there not be a recognition that God's hand is working with us as a Father? Also, we are to realize that we are really only clay, of the earth, of no use in that form; yet, capable of being molded, changed. The Almighty in His wisdom takes us as the clay of His hand and works to form us into a useful vessel. He alone can do this, just as the potter does. He alone has the wisdom and the power to shape a mortal creature into a suitable vessel. Our poor clay may not like the forming process, for it changes, forces us into a way contrary to what we want. Yet, must we not remember *He is the potter*; we are merely the work of His hand? In that process, we have to be formable, or else the potter will reject the clay as unsuitable. It is a painful process; but, what a blessing when it is finished—when the Judge of all grants the things prepared for them who wait on Him!

How difficult we find it is to submit, for we may have other ideas as to what our position or work may be. But again, let us accept that it is only the potter who knows what is best. Especially in the early stages of being formed, part of His family, we are babes, needing to slowly grow in subjection and experience. How greatly, in time, we will appreciate that *the potter* working with utter wisdom, feeds, nurtures, guides, instructs and holds back. He is by this means carefully building as a parent does in

a very small child, toward a spiritually healthy adult; one able, as he grows and learns, to contribute more substantially to the home and family. The all-wise Father never ceases His work with the clay. No matter what our age or experience, no matter what we may have learned, clay is what we are—always prone to crack and break. He is shaping us to conform to His will, wanting us to become vessels meet for His use. Should not our reaction be—I'll wait on Him, I'll go softly and with deference, letting His hand reveal how I must be formed, yearning to be changed from this lump of clay into something which gives Him pleasure?

Is this not a big part of waiting on the Lord? Is this a way we can show our love for Him, our trust, our hope, and our fear?

God knew the hope of the prophet Isaiah; and, in answer to his plea that He would rend the present evil heavens and earth, the Almighty revealed what He *has* prepared for those that wait for Him:

“For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth:
and the former shall not be remembered . . .
But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create:
for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people
a joy.
And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: . . .”
Isaiah 65:17-19.

This is the same revelation that John, another faithful one who waited for the Lord, knew:

“ . . . I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first
heaven and the first earth were passed away;
. . . And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming
down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned
for her husband.”

Revelation 21:1-2.

Truly, Brethren and Sisters, these things which are prepared for those who in love wait on Him, have been revealed by His Spirit. For what purpose?—that we may hope to have a part in this wondrous future which God is making ready, and which we believe may soon come to pass. As we consider these words of Isaiah, written so long ago, let us set our minds more firmly upon this hope which God has prepared; let us determine to submit more fully in waiting upon Him, growing in love for the One who alone can perform these wonders.

J.A.DeF.

The Sure Mercies of David

In our portions in Isaiah we are reminded of God's calling to the Truth, and the hope of eternal life that call speaks of. Isaiah 55:3 informs us of the response to hearing God's word.

"Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

These words speak to us of the hope that God places before all those who hear. If there is a hearing, the everlasting covenant can be extended to us as it was to all from the beginning of time. What does that covenant involve? God will be our Father and are to be His children and those sure mercies extended to David will be ours as well.

We go to II Samuel 7:12 we read of those mercies or blessings given to David:

"And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thine own body, and I will establish his kingdom. verse 12.

He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever verse 13.

I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men. verse 14.

And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever." verse 16.

In the midst of all these promises that Nathan the prophet related to David we read in the 15th verse of these sure mercies:

"But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee."

God speaks of His mercies to be extended in the midst of the promises to David for these promises were given only out of God's kindness.

We read of David's response in the 18th verse:

"Then went King David in, and sat before the Lord, and he said, Who am I. O Lord God? And what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far?"

And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?

And what can David say more unto thee? For thou, Lord God, knowest thy servant.

For thy word's sake, and according to thine own heart, hast thou done all these great things, to make thy servant know them.

Wherefore, thou art great O Lord God; for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears."

From David's response, full of humility, we can see why God extended His mercies to such a man. David's response is preserved for our benefit so that we can know the type of heart God looks for in His children. His response was one which was overwhelmed by the goodness of God extended to him. One who asks, "who am I" to be worthy of such an honour. Saul could have had these same promises but he lacked confidence and trust in God. It is one thing to know what is required to please God, but another to constantly seek after it as did David. Our response should be as this 55th chapter of Isaiah reminds us in verse 1:

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Why do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

We see here that what God offers cannot be bought with money. No money is enough to buy what he offers freely to His children. How can we who have no money; come, buy and eat;?" By taking in the word of God and allowing it to work within us, by revealing a spirit which appreciates that which is held out to us. The flesh does not value the promises held out "Why do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your labour for that which satisfieth not?" (verse 2). We are told to "... eat that which is good", which speaks of the word of God, the only things which is truly good, without fault.

In Isaiah the thought of fatness" in verse 2 is a help, for it reminds us of the sacrifices and the practice of removing the ashes which remained after the fat, or the best part, had been consumed by the fire. It wasn't only the consuming of the fat but also the sweet smell of this burning which was pleasing to God, and can we see that only as our flesh is consumed can we be pleasing as well?

In a practical application we read of David in Psalm 51 entitled "To the chief Musician, (or Victor) a Psalm of David when Nathan the prophet came unto him after he had gone in to Bathsheba". We read of David's mind in verses 1-3:

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

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

Does this perhaps reveal the spirit of one who when sin was revealed in him, valued the sure mercies extended to him by beseeching God for forgiveness and cleansing, knowing only God can provide a covering to blot out iniquity?

"For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

Psalm 51:16, 17.

David obviously knew that the only way God's mercies could be removed from him was in the exhibition of a hard and unyielding spirit, one refusing to be corrected, unpliant in God's hand. Even in failure David's response to God's chastening was more valuable than sacrifice, . . . thou desirest not sacrifice else would I give it", and what was that spirit like? His mind was open to God's correction, willing to have God work with him, bending and molding him in the right way. Speaking of the fulfillment of God's promises to David in the person of the Lord Jesus, we read in Acts 13:32

"And we declare unto you glad tidings, how the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said in this way, I will give you the *sure mercies of David*."

We are reminded here that only through belief in the Lord Jesus, the fulfillment of those sure mercies of David, the word made flesh can salvation come. Are we diligently hearkening after God's

word? We must if we are to attain unto David's example and inherit the promises and the sure mercies that were extended to that man after God's own heart. The 6th verse of Isaiah 55 tells us:

“Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.”

This is truly one of the sure mercies of God, that if we will seek Him, He is near, close by to help and strengthen us as a Father, but the time is short. Let us seek after Him with all our heart, and hope to receive the sure mercies of David laid up in store for those who can overcome.

M.C.S.



“SEEK — — — IF THERE BE ANY”

The words of Jesus to those who are disciplined to carry His message are clear:

“He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.” (Luke 10:16)

If there is a neglecting to hear, then Christ is neglected, and God His Father. But it is so easy, so possible, to neglect the purveyors of truth if they are few and insignificant. Yet the position truly is, that usually, the purveyors of the truth *are* insignificant.

“In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.” (verse 21)

The wise of this world (in the main) find no place in such a work of Christ. They have a religious work; but so had the priests and Pharisees of Christ’s day, but to what end was their work? And to what end is the work of the exalted in the religious world in these times?

Moving on we look at the following:

“Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.

And though they say, The Lord liveth; surely they swear falsely.

O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.

Therefore I said, Surely these are poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God.

I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them; for they have known the way of the Lord, and the judgment of their God: but these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds.” (Jeremiah 5:1-5)

How appropriate are these words in context with what we have already considered:

“I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them, for they have known the way of the Lord.”

But what has happened to them then and now? What has become of the leaders who knew the judgments of God? Have they not altogether broken the yoke? Metaphorically that which, in the balance of the spirit, carries and bears forth “the burden” of truth. Yes, the leaders, the great ones of the people of God, have failed. “Run ye to and fro, and see now — — —” What do we see? Why a great apostasy! “Seek — — — if ye can find a man, *if there be any* that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth.” Yes, that was what it was like then. Is it any different now!? So as we look at the history, can we feel allied to the prophet’s viewpoint? “Surely these *are* poor; they are foolish: for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God.” As we consider how apostasy has so greatly prevailed in these last days, are we not impressed by the concluding verses of this chapter from Jeremiah?

“A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land: The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?”

(verses 30-31)

The purveyors of truth are false to what they claim to be. What are they prophesying for, if they prophesy falsely? Surely it is for their own ends. Pride, prestige and a following. But what good are leaders and people, if leaders are false, and those led by such leaders are quite satisfied, and would not have it otherwise. It is wonderful, i.e. astonishing, but also hateful in the sight of the Spirit. What is man; and what right has he to jockey for position in the truth? What right has he to use the words of truth to vaunt his own prestige? But this has been one of the prevailing evils of these last days, bringing about a disintegrating apostasy. These bear rule by their means, (margin: take into their hands); take it into their own hands! They latch upon some crotchety issue which brings a rod to bear upon those who are impressed or intimidated by the rod. “Submit, or else!” Those who will not have such over lording are despatched, and so self elevation of the overlord is assured. But to what end? Is it for the preservation of truth, or the preservation of the opinions of the self opinionated and the oppressor?

Such a state of affairs is not the executing of judgment and the seeking of truth, which is the only means of finding favour and pardon in the sight of God. Furthermore because such a state of affairs *is*, (as the message of Jeremiah explains) “a prophesying

falsely", these people in all their disintegrating factions are riddled with inconsistency. Therefore we find, that what they lay down on one occasion as being what is required, is changed at a later date as *not being* required, that is when they, the leaders, become personally affected.

"Run ye to and fro — — — and see now, and know, and seek — — — if there be any." No wonder there are so few in these last days.

What a lesson is to be learned from the times of Samuel, Saul and David. Saul was undoubtedly the leader but was he leading for God or for himself?

"Then the king sent to call Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's house, the priests that were in Nob: and they came all of them to the king.

And Saul said, Hear now, thou son of Ahitub. And he answered, Here I am, my Lord.

And Saul said unto him, Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day."

(1 Sam. 22:11-13)

Saul accused Ahitub of doing wrong. But what wrong had he done? The accused tried to reason in defence. But one who desires privilege, and the position of an over-lord, will not listen to reason.

"And the king said, Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou, and all thy father's house."

(verse 16)

Cut them off! that was the cry. Did the people believe in the very depths of their conscience that Saul was right? No, they did not!

"And the king said unto the footmen that stood about him, Turn, and slay the priests of the Lord; because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it to me. But the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the Lord."

(verse 17)

But that sort of hesitation does not deter the determined:

"And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod."

(verse 18)

Doeg was a henchman. His ambition was to have Saul's favour, which mattered more than justice. As for the rest, their acquiescence was their own condemnation. They stood by, and allowed a weak minority to be treated so unjustly and cruelly. Human nature of course is ever the same. Can we wonder then at the words of the prophet—"Run ye to and fro — — — and seek — — — if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth." The latter day apostasy is a latter day fulfilment of these words and also a dire warning against the power and deception of the flesh; a warning for us to take heed.



“EXCEPT A CORN OF WHEAT — — —”

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.”

(John 12:24-26)

And what an honour it is to be called to serve the Lord Jesus Christ—called to be members of His Body, but let us remember that this honour may be attained unto only upon the conditions laid down in the Word of God, and divine conditions always seem to be objectionable to human nature.

How great then is the mercy of God to allow us to perceive that living power hidden in His word which attracts minds disposed to be humble, that we might acknowledge our maker and sustainer.

Each one of us has been allowed to realise that in a world living in the shadow of death, God has provided a Saviour who is alive for evermore. “He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.” (John 11:25)

We are all members of His Body, each one has a part—a work to do, and according to the faithful performance of our part so the body works effectively and in unity, and without friction. Yes, each one has a part and each one of us must gravely consider the work to which we are entrusted and to work sincerely as one who must render an account before the Son of God.

In the case of the natural body unity exists because one mind is in control. Think! How different if each member had an independent and different mind, one foot deciding to go in one direction and the other a different one. What confusion there would be, so how essential is unity, and how careful we need to be to observe the words of the Lord Jesus—“Let this mind be in you.” (If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His). For where the members of the Body of Christ are working harmoniously together there will be no envying or murmuring, for each will be concerned with the duties which are theirs.

Let us remember—we are members of His Body, of His flesh and of His bones. It is written, “For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall be joined to his wife and they

shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Ecclesia." Christ and the Ecclesia—many members yet one body, the Head of which is Christ, the one who gave a perfect manifestation of the love which binds the members so close to Him and to each other for without it we are lost. "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." In other words, if any man serve me let him follow me, and if any man serve me him will my Father honour." "This is my commandment, that ye love one another", and in His prayer to God, He asked that the members of His body might be kept in unity. "I in them and thou in me that they may be made perfect in one."

"Except a corn of wheat — — —. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." What is the Lord Jesus telling us in this likening to a grain of wheat? Is it not that unless we die, that is to this world, we shall in effect abide alone—i.e. without Him, without hope. If we love this life, we shall lose it; but if we hate our lives in this world we shall keep it unto life eternal, and the only way to do this is to serve Him acceptably for—"if any man serve me him will my Father honour", i.e. with life eternal.

There may be many who profess to serve Him, to a degree, but what of us? How far are we prepared to go? This is a searching question, for unless we are prepared in our serving, even to die to this world, which does have its attractions in so many ways, we shall lose eternal life. "Ye are bought with a price, ye are not your own." There may be a readiness to proclaim the gospel, to stand up and to exhort, maybe, but how many of us are prepared to give ourselves as the Lord Jesus did, to give our time, strength and possessions for each other, and to put the good and joy of our brethren and sisters before our own? These are searching questions which each one of us must face for surely this is what is meant by—dying to this world—the only way to truly serve the Lord Jesus Christ. "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you", sets the pattern.

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

Love is the fulfilling of the Law, love is the pivot around which the whole life of the Ecclesia turns. How then can we measure it? Perhaps it would do each one of us good just to ponder a little on this question—how can we measure our love which is so essential—for each other? Perhaps it does need a little heart searching really, but it should not be too difficult to find out if

this love exists. We need only to ask ourselves the question—How would it affect me if Brother or Sister so-and-so went away? Would we be sorry or distressed at the thought or would we perhaps feel glad in a way. If so, there is something wrong which needs immediate attention, for if love does not exist between each and every one, how can we hope to be in unity? and to serve the Lord Jesus acceptably? Is there not a danger in our efforts to serve, that we are really serving ourselves? This is a possibility, for it is not always what we profess, but what we actually do. How careful we need to be that we turn not to the right nor to the left, neither slothful nor righteous overmuch—the truth requires a balance.

In the meat offering, which was a voluntary one, is contained much instruction on how to serve and keep the balance. We see in Leviticus ch. 2:1-2, it is an offering made by fire, a sweet savour unto the Lord. Sweet, or as the word means, rest, meaning that God would rest with those offerings that pleased Him. How meaningful. We note in verse 11, burn no leaven nor any honey. Why? What is the instruction?

Surely it is to help us to serve Him, that we may receive honour from the Father—salvation. It is perhaps easy to understand why leaven was forbidden in the meat offering, because of the representing of malice and wickedness. We could not imagine any offering where malice and wickedness—i.e. the opposite of love—had any part could possibly be acceptable, but what of honey, that which is good?

“How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”

(Psalm 119:103)

Do we get the answer in Proverbs 25:27-

“It is not good to eat much honey: so for men to search their own glory is not glory”

So here is the instruction. That the thing condemned in the typical prohibition of honey from the meat offering was self-glory. Self-glory is an abomination to God and was shown to be so in its prohibition from the meat offering.

So it follows that in our service, in our strivings to follow after the Lord Jesus, there must neither be malice and wickedness, nor self-glory—to the extent of thinking we can never be wrong, for this is serving ourselves and not God. This is living after the flesh, which we know can only end in death, and which the Lord Jesus also had very much in mind when He said:-

“Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die,
it abideth alone; but if it die,—*if it die*, it bringeth forth
much fruit — — — (even) to life eternal.”

J.S.



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

NOT OF THE LORD OF HOSTS THAT THE PEOPLE
SHALL LABOUR IN THE VERY FIRE — — —
ROTTENNESS ENTERED INTO MY BONES, AND I
TREMbled IN MYSELF, THAT I MIGHT REST IN
THE DAY OF TROUBLE: — — —.

(Habakkuk 2:13 and 3:16)

At the time of writing the British Central Government has announced that it will lay down regulations compelling Localised Authorities to take part in civil defence exercises as and from December 1st. The scheme first appeared last April, but the British General Election came along and so these matters were placed in abeyance. The requirements of Central Government is that all County Councils and also the Greater London Council will be obligated to operate a civil defence strategy and continually keep this up to date. If they do not, the Government will be able to put in a commissar to take over, the Councils to pay his costs, and examination made of the behaviour of Local Authority leaders in their non-compliance with the Central directive. They could then be individually surcharged for the extra cost. It has been estimated that about sixty-nine million pounds will be spent upon making provision for a nuclear war in the first year, and a similar amount in the second year.

Beyond that no estimate of intended expenditure is given.

Meanwhile considerable support has been evident for The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Great congregations of people in the streets of London, Hamburg and Bonn, have protested about nuclear missiles being sited in Great Britain and West Germany.

The terse reaction of the British Government to these activities was to announce that no amount of anti-nuclear demonstrations by West Europeans would change their defence policies. The Soviet offer to reduce their number of missiles aimed at Western Europe to equal the number of British and French missiles was firmly dismissed.

So, as arranged previously with the United States, Britain is providing for an increase of nuclear rockets upon its territory. Russia in turn, as a result, will expand the number on its side of the border.

These fiery gadgets of course are very expensive, and people are having to labour in all sorts of ways and accept less of other

things so that funds are available for the production and siting of these dreadful weapons.

Thus, as prophesied so long ago, a situation has developed in which the laborious earnings of the nations are being expended for the very fire.

Yet how vain it all is! What good is labour for “the very fire”? What can a nuclear fire “produce”? Who can escape a nuclear holocaust? What good would this world be for the few survivors (if any) in a contaminated, poisoned planet?

There is no hope for man apart from the help of the Great Creator of this good earth. But He has declared words of hope:-

“For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

(Habakkuk 2:14)



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.

The death of our sister Theresa Williams brings sadness and a sense of great loss. Gratitude is felt that she was spared suffering and pain. She now sleeps awaiting the call to judgment and the hope of eternal life in the kingdom of God.

We are mindful of the work in Manchester and join with them in prayer for God's guidance.

J.A.DeF.

"PENTRIP" Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread: Sundays 11.30 a.m.

Bible Class: Midweek.

We have to report the passing of our Sister Theresa Williams at Portmadoc Hospital on the 30th September. It is with sadness we pen such news and yet we are grateful to have the deep sustaining hope of the Truth to know that at the appointed time she will be raised to appear once more amongst members who have had the Truth.

per D.L.

MANCHESTER, Rycroft Hall Annexe, Audenshaw, Manchester

Breaking of Bread: Sundays 11.30 a.m.

Young People's Class: Sundays 2.00 p.m.

Bible Class: Thursdays 7.30 p.m.

The funeral of Sister Theresa Williams took place at Treflys Cemetary, Portmadoc on Saturday, October, 8th 1983.

About forty people were present which gave the opportunity to witness to the Truth, the Brethren being well supported by the attendance of the Brethren and Sisters.

The sympathies of the Ecclesia are towards our Sister Bessie Williams in her sad loss which is felt by all.