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A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

and a warning against the deception in the last days
foretold by Christ

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At the Table of the Lord

ISRAEL AT SINAI

How wonderful that we have been allowed to stand upon Mount Sinai with Moses, and through his record, to listen to the voice of the Almighty. Our recent portions in Exodus permit us to “hear” as He gave instruction, guidance, laws, statutes, and judgments to His people. What a fearful experience it must have been for Moses as he in obedience went up into the cloud, the thick darkness, which had God’s Presence, lest flesh look upon Him. Yet it was out of that cloud that God spoke. The mountain we remember was quaking, there was thunder, lightning, and the voice of a trumpet, causing fright and dread of the awesome power. Yet Moses was required to go up. He would surely approach with much trepidation, hesitating to trespass in the holy Presence. He would remember a previous experience upon that same mountain when he saw the burning bush, and was instructed of God to return to Egypt to deliver Israel from the cruel bondage of Pharaoh. Moses no doubt remembered God’s words spoken from that burning bush. These unforgettable words of the God of Israel were:

“. . . Certainly I will go with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.”
Exodus 3:12.

The mountain was Horeb—Sinai. Here after God’s hand had worked so wondrously in Egypt and at the Red Sea, Moses was again brought to serve God as He had promised. As he trembling ascended, would not he be helped by seeing this promise fulfilled?

At the burning bush, deliverance for Israel must have seemed remote, but after the accomplished wonders, Moses would remember and rejoice at God’s faithfulness—at the sureness of His word. In all Moses’ life, this present experience would never cease to impress—would never be forgotten. Also to the children of Israel, this would bring wonder, fear, and humbleness for here God spoke. They as a people actually heard his voice, as have no other people before this time, nor since.

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It was in the third month after their deliverance from Egypt that Israel was led by the pillar of cloud to this mount Horeb. We are told that as Moses went up:

“. . . the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.”
Exodus 19:3-4.

He reminded his people of the loving care they had known in their deliverance from bondage. How wise, for being human, there was the tendency to forget this remarkable truth, especially as they experienced hunger and thirst which tested their gratitude and love for their Deliverer. In addition, their Father granted a covenant:

“Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: . . . And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”
Exodus 19:5.

What a blessed position—to be exclusively His treasure, His sanctified nation—but this was only possible as a covenant was made by mutual agreement, a vow to do so being given:

“. . . All the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.” Exodus 19:8.

With the making of this covenant, God in mercy and love gave to Israel through Moses, the law—the “ten commandments”—the judgments, the statutes, the precepts, of which we have recently read. How just and righteous were all these, reminding His people that they were from God, who Himself is only just and righteous. If there could be an honoring of these laws today by all in the earth, what a finer, more righteous, safer, more pleasing world this would be! We know this will not come to pass until Jesus returns, establishing His kingdom, and ruling in righteousness and justice. These laws were given to Israel, who failed to keep them, and rarely saw beyond the form and the letter.

As a result, rather than being blessed, or continuing to be His peculiar treasure, a nation of priests, they were ultimately scattered in torment and trial. This is a warning to us, Brethren and Sisters, lest we, in desire to serve Him, may willingly say, “All that the Lord hath spoken we will do”—and yet fail because something else comes along which seems more important, diverting us from that vow.

On a later occasion, God again called Moses up into Mount Sinai:

“. . . Come up unto the Lord, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off. And Moses alone shall come near the Lord: but they shall not come nigh; . . .”
Exodus 24:1-2.

Only Moses was allowed the privilege of receiving the law, and teaching it unto his brethren. Later we remember that two of those who were allowed to come unto the holy mountain, Nadab and Abihu, rebelled against Moses and against God, offering “strange fire” before Him—and were devoured by a fire which came forth from the Almighty. Why did they fail? Possibly they felt exalted—having been chosen to go up into the mount when Moses, Aaron, and the seventy were called forth—failing to perceive the humbling privilege, but instead allowing “self” to become lifted up. At this time, however, Moses listened carefully and:

“. . . wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar . . .
And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings . . .”
Exodus 24:4-5.

We are shown (verses 6 and 7) how Moses took half of the blood of these sacrifices, and sprinkled it upon the altar, and also read the book of the covenant in the audience of the people. What was their reaction to these things, done no doubt at the commandment of God? Again the people vowed:

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

This was a renewing of their determination to serve their God, and in order to confirm it:

“. . . Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.”
Exodus 24:8.

How real was the covenant, that book, and those offerings! God had spoken directly to our brethren, the mountain of God quaked, Moses had gone up into the cloud and received the law. It was written in a book for their instruction; and there upon their garments they could plainly see the sprinkled blood of the covenant—speaking to the perceptive in Israel of the necessity for shedding

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blood as a part of that covenant. It is said to them, and to us today, that God would send a sacrifice, His Son, whose blood would join His people to their Creator in an everlasting promise. Can it be as real to us, Brethren and Sisters? We did not see the mountain, did not hear the thunder, the trumpet sounding loud, nor the voice of God speaking directly; yet we are allowed to know the mercy granted through our portions of spiritual food read this week. Can our perception be sufficient with His help to be moved as was Moses when he heard and wrote these words for us? Can we determine in our hearts to serve the One who granted such mercy and grace? Are the words of our vow always in mind especially in a time of trial, to help us overcome our weak selves?

Help continues to be shown to us through Moses' experiences. He was once again called up into the Mount where:

“ . . . the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount . . .

And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, . . . and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.”

Exodus 24:17-18.

During those forty days God communed with him, giving the pattern of the tabernacle and all that it spoke of. He gave instructions concerning its materials, which were to be the free will offering of those brethren and sisters who were “willing-hearted.” Later, after the tabernacle was assembled precisely according to God's direction, each of those who had offered with that willing heart, could look upon it and know that their giving was involved—that they had a part in it. What an inspiring thought for us as there grows a perception that it is possible for mere men to have a part in that dwelling place of God. But this is true only as there is a willingness to freely give of ourselves, our time, our strength, and our goods for its building.

God's will was manifest also concerning Aaron and his sons, and the garments they were to wear when performing the service of His House:

“ . . . Thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty.”

Exodus 28:2.

Wearing these garments, the high priest in his work pointed forward to THE One yet to come, clothed with glory and beauty in Himself, and in those accompanying Him in this work. We think especially of the breastplate bound over his heart as he went into the holy place. Its twelve lustrous, precious stones—cut,

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polished, and then engraved with the names of the children of Israel. These would reflect the scintillating brightness of the candlestick, manifesting the glory of God, His light, His power, and His Presence.

Here today we have just read of the consecration of Aaron and his sons—of their becoming clothed with the holy garments, and anointed (messiahed) to do God's work. A sacrifice was required, the blood of it to accomplish the consecration. God's instruction was:

“Then shalt thou kill the ram, and take of his blood, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron . . . and his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood upon the altar . . . and sprinkle it upon Aaron . . . and upon his sons . . . and he shall be hallowed . . . and his sons . . .”
Exodus 29:20-21.

What a strong and wondrous effect this would have on Aaron and his sons. They watched the blood being sprinkled, hallowing them. As they looked upon that blood, would they not realize how totally necessary was that sacrifice and that blood poured out? Without it they could not be set apart for the great and invaluable purpose intended. Here was God's object revealed, seen in the life of His Son yet to come, and to be given so willingly, so perfectly to honour and justify His Father, and to redeem His brethren.

Shall we then try with renewed desire to join Moses as he was called up into the holy mountain, as he trembling obeyed God, and learned, submitted, and rejoiced in the hope so clearly revealed? It is help for us. Is it close and alive and real—impelling us with strength to renew our vow: “All that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient”?

J.A.DeF.



Wisdom

As we look to the Proverbs, we find a great deal spoken about wisdom. Throughout the thirty-one proverbs, wisdom or advice to the wise is given. It is not surprising as we study Solomon, the author, to see just how greatly he was endowed with wisdom. When we look up the word wisdom we find that it means “to be wise” but likewise means “to be skillful”. The thought of skillful perhaps helps us to better understand the meaning of wisdom, for the idea of skillful gives us the thought of being able to apply that wisdom. The eighth chapter of Proverbs tell us what wisdom is like, and in the 20th and 21st verses we read:

“I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.”

Here we are told that wisdom leads the way to righteousness. God’s wisdom does this only as we are sensitive to the Spirit and can be led by it. We are constantly called upon to use our judgment to discern between right and wrong, spirit and flesh. We can in knowledge discern between the two, but do we in wisdom, submit and apply that knowledge skillfully? There is a constant warfare going on within us. On the one hand we have the flesh with its selfish outlook and on the other hand the wisdom of the Spirit, waiting to be applied rightly to overcome the flesh. The ways of righteousness can only be followed as we apply the wisdom of the Spirit, as there is an application of God’s word then help is granted from our Father to overcome. In a practical sense we know many people who have great academic knowledge in a certain field, but when it comes to practically applying that knowledge they have no skill to do so. Likewise with God’s word, we can know what should be done, but if we lack practice and skill to do it we are lost.

We have an example of the flesh versus the spirit of wisdom in Numbers where we have read of the twelve spies about to enter into the land of Canaan. Moses gave them directions as we read in Numbers 13:17-20:

“And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain:

And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents or in strong hold; And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the firstripe grapes.”

This was the charge given by Moses to those twelve spies. It was really God’s charge through Moses. Surely a test, for God was looking to see if they would be “led in the ways of righteousness”. It was with purpose that God sent out twelve men, one from each tribe. He was leading, but would the people follow? We know the results, that only two of the spies gave a good report—Caleb and Joshua. Caleb in verse 30 tells us about the land:

“And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.”

Only Caleb and Joshua were able to use their wisdom skillfully. They judged the situation rightly knowing that with the help of God’s spirit nothing would be withheld from His people. Caleb and Joshua believed that the people had the skills needed, had the wisdom of God and could overcome whatever obstacles lay in their path. The other ten were not of the same courage, they could not bring themselves to apply the wisdom of God. “Be of good courage” means to exert or apply oneself, to take a step forward in faith, a test of wisdom. We too are led in the way of righteousness by God, and are given the opportunity to see if we will do those things that God requires in His wisdom. Let us take warning from those spies; only two were able to exert themselves to conquer the doubts of the flesh with the strength of God’s spirit within them.

David, like Caleb and Joshua was one who recognized and valued God’s wisdom. When we go back to Psalm 27, written by David, we are helped to see his mind as he speaks concerning his test of probation and the application of wisdom:

“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (verse 1)

From these words we see the wisdom of David. Here was a man who loved God, and whose greatest fear was not of those around

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him—his enemies, but a fear of failing to do what God required of him. And because of this spirit within David he was called a man after God's own heart. We know that God did lead David in righteousness, because of this great love that David displayed for God, and He will lead us as well if there is a love for Him and His ways. As our verse in Proverbs 8:20 tell us:

“I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: That I may cause those **that love me** to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.”

“To inherit substance” makes us think of a legacy to come—the promise held out of wealth or riches that can be ours in time. What greater legacy could a Father give His children than the hope of eternal life, waiting for those who love Him and who apply His wisdom with skill. This legacy is not an automatic gift, it is one that must be worked for, a lifetime's work of judging and applying God's wisdom rightly and submitting our flesh to the work of the spirit. David did not find the struggle easy, for he says in Psalm 27:13:

“I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.”

He would have fainted, given up, except he believed. Believed in what? He believed in the goodness and righteousness of God as he saw the indication of God's guidance in his life. He was then able to judge rightly, take courage and not faint because he knew God's spirit was overlooking and directing him. He was not alone, and he encourages us by saying in verse 14:

“Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.”

David many times during his life was required to show courage, strength, and a submission to God's purpose. But as he survived each trial, no doubt his faith and courage were strengthened and likewise his ability to apply God's wisdom skillfully in the next situation that came along to test him. Is it not like a craftsman applying his trade? He does not become a master overnight, it takes years of apprenticeship, many hours of tedious labour, as well as many mistakes to learn his skill. Only by much trial and test comes perfection. So it is with the word of God given to us, it must be applied over much time, learning from our errors to be able to produce what is pleasing and acceptable to God.

In II Timothy 3: 15-17 Paul tells us the great importance of God's wisdom:

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“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee **wise unto salvation** through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Does this not consolidate our thoughts that through the knowledge that God gives, comes the hope of salvation? As the words in Proverbs tell us, wisdom “leads in the ways of righteousness”. All for one purpose—“that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” This is true wisdom, applying those things that are found in the word of God. And what is the end for those who can do this?

“For whoso findeth me (wisdom) findeth **life**, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.” (Proverbs 8:35)

This then is the promise and legacy God has offered to us, that if we can be led by Him to do His will we have the hope of treasure stored up—life without end, that can only come through wisdom and the skilful application of it in our lives.

M.C.S.



Out of Bondage

Certain verses particularly shine forth from the scriptures as an assurance to us.

“I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you to go upright.”
(Leviticus 26:13)

Let us be sure of this fact that we should still be bondmen to “Egypt” had God not looked mercifully upon us to bring us out. The whole organisation of secular society is designed to bring all its people into subserviance to its collective will, organised by those in power. In being “brought out” we are delivered from the bondage of delusion. We are allowed to understand how meaningless all these present things are. How unjust and imperfect is man’s rule; but how true and unswerving are the promises of God. God is just and righteous, only in His way is there life and peace in being brought forth from “Egypt”. As the verse says, “I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright”.

What a blessing it is to be helped by God to follow the course in this life which God intended for man. It is the serpent which crawls, but it is the man helped by God who is enabled to walk uprightly.

Moving on now to Psalm 142 for further encouragement, its title says that it is a Psalm of David giving instruction. It is the record of his prayer when he was in the cave. The incident referred to is in 1 Samuel 22:1:-

“David therefore departed thence, and escaped to the cave Adullam: and when his brethren and all his father’s house heard it, they went down thither to him.”

David had been in Gath of the land of the Philistines, but he was shown, just as we are shown in these times, that there is no help of man.

“And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath.

And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of

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him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

And David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath.

And he changed his behaviour before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.

Then saith Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man is mad wherefore then have ye brought him to me?"

(chapter 21:10-14)

David thought he might be given a refuge in Gath. Events showed that there is no refuge from evil amongst those who are not with God. The situation was so difficult there, that David had to mask what he really thought and how he felt, under a guise that he could hardly help feel was humiliating. His thoughts are revealed to us in Psalm 142:4----

“I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.”

The only real deliverance is by being “brought out” and being helped to “walk upright”. The only true refuge is in God. In difficulty, particularly, we are helped and shown this Truth. David in his desperate circumstances was brought to a clearer perception of how it is God alone that can deliver us from the bondage which binds the world.

“I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me.”

(verses 5-7)

Again we are allowed into David’s innermost contemplations by the following words from Psalm 143:8-9:-

“Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me.”

To know the way wherein to walk, is to walk uprightly. There

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is another way of course, and many there be that go therein, but there is no upright walk in the way of the crawling serpent. "I flee unto thee to hide me (margin Hebrew, hide me with thee)". Is it not true to say that all who are "brought forth" by God, and have the "bands of their yoke broken" are "hidden with God"? This was truly the case of old when Israel were taken out of Egypt, for God did then hide them in the wilderness where He fed and clothed them and kept them from embroilment with those who would have brought them into bondage again.

There was a degree of hardship in the wilderness of course, but there was also the profound peace of God in that situation. If Israel's peace was disturbed it was only through their own murmuring. And so it is in the latter day wilderness. There is no noise and strife in the wilderness. Not even the sound of the sea and the waves roaring. There may be a degree of hardship, but God can always and will provide. "Hide me with thee" said David. Can we not say the same?

Moving on now once more we have the statement of the Apostle Paul:-

"Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord?"
(1 Cor. 9:1)

Yes, the apostle had been made free in a most remarkable way. He had also previously been "bound"; just as bound metaphorically as those Israelites, his forefathers had been in their land of Egypt. His freedom came as he heard the voice and beheld the glory greater than the noon-day sun. We have also been helped in not a dissimilar way, for when we "saw", that is, "discerned" Jesus, and then acted as the Apostle himself acted, we were delivered.

The Apostle did not at first think he needed to be shown, he thought he knew already what was required; therefore was himself of the belief that he was not in bondage. But truly he had been in bondage as much as any other, and when the "cords" were loosed from off him and he was shown that which was upright he was filled with earnest zeal that he might be an implement of God to bring others "out".

What a vocation, in being free from the hopeless ways, and snares, and cords of men, to become a servant for those who would be favoured by God. So the Apostle declares:-

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“For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.”

(verse 19)

“And this I do for the gospel’s sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.”

(verse 23)

It cannot be said that the Apostle Paul had an easy life, but he knew he had a profound hope which he could never have had, had he remained in his former life. So, as in the case of many others, God in His great mercy had brought him out of the metaphorical land of Egypt, basically as false in its worship as the Egyptian worship had been to his ancient forefathers, even though claiming to serve the One God.

Is it not the same for any today who are really taken out? So to us comes that gem of scripture, just as apt as at that other time:—

“I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.”

What a blessing that through the Truth we can walk uprightly, with the vision which such a position gives to us; so infinitely better than the way of the crawling serpent that has a low horizon and which belongs to the dust; and we are told that the dust shall be the serpent’s meat.



“Behold I set before you the Way of Life . . .”

Could there be a more vital message in the whole of the Word of God than the one we read in Jeremiah 21:8:—

“And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death.”

The importance of this is emphasised when we consider the record in Deuteronomy where the same message was given to God’s people in verse 15:—

“See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil.”

The message continues through to verse 20 and concludes:—

“That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, . . . that thou mayest cleave unto him: **for he is thy life, . . .**”

These few verses surely are vital especially verse 17 which pinpoints a very grave danger — “But if thine heart turn away . . .” — truly this is the danger that the heart might turn away and we will not hear, with such dreadful consequences. And so it is, that there are times in our lives when we, through circumstances of difficulty and adversity are compelled to consider the vital import of this same statement:—

“See—I have set before thee this day, life and death.”

Seeing also that the life which God offers is concerned with His Kingdom, how relevant also are the words in Matthew 18:3:—

“And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

What then does it mean to be converted? The answer is not difficult for a conversion means a change, and change there must be. We do need, each one, to pause and to diligently consider ourselves, which calls for a real heart searching. If we know in ourselves that there are changes which need to be made then action is required, and quickly. The natural response is to put off and delay, deceiving oneself by the thought that there is ample

time available. To help us to reality, it is a sobering thought to consider that the day of account (judgment day) is really only as far away or as near, as the day of our death, for the next conscious moment will be when we are raised. At this time all opportunity to change will have gone, and yet change there must be, otherwise the instruction regarding conversion would have no meaning. This is imperative—we must alter and to alter, which means to adjust our manner of living is not easy, but we have divine instruction to help us—“Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven” and to become as little children we must have faith in God, trusting and having faith as a child has in its natural father.

Change there must be, if we are to become after the pattern -- the Lord Jesus Christ. We have been called in the mercy of God when we were dead in trespasses and sins, called to become after the pattern and we have been given the opportunity to change from what we are naturally to become worthy of the inheritance which is in the grasp of each one, providing that there is this conversion which God requires.

Can we then take advantage of the time which remains to put into practice the things that we need to learn from the experiences and trials which each one must undergo for the perfecting of a people who are to live for ever. To accept and to acknowledge is truly part of our struggle, but to act and to adjust where indicated is the difference between life and death. To change is not easy and the natural mind is not conducive to change, in some cases it takes years to become aware of the changes that need to be made in us, showing that God is very merciful and longsuffering towards His children, but let us not forget that there are limits to this. To the disciples did not the Lord Jesus say, “I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now”—indicating that there was the need for them to be converted—by accepting the instructions of an all wise Father—when they could and would have to bear those many things to enable them to enter into the Kingdom of God.

We all need to be converted. we all need to be changed in some way or other, otherwise we would be perfect. When we consider to what we are called, and what it really means surely gives food for thought. Is it not true that we are called to share the Kingdom of God for ever—to live for eternity in love, joy and peace with each other? Surely then we must learn and put into practice these things now, which must be one aspect of this conversion for if we

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cannot love the brethren and sisters of the Lord Jesus now, how can we expect to do so in the kingdom of God? Does not this thought help us to grasp the reality of these words of the Lord Jesus:—

“Except ye be converted **and** become as little children (trusting in faith) ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven.”



What is Truth (Part 2)

(John 18:38)

THE LAW IN THE BEGINNING

There was a beginning for man. The Bible clearly shows that man was not an evolvement from a previous lower form of life.

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (Genesis 2:7)

Here is shown an immediate transition from dust formation of life, and speaks of the great power to be revealed in the last day which will again breath into the dust and bring forth therefrom the resurrection of those who having lived had turned to dust again. “Some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” (Daniel 12:2) These words of Daniel tell of a judgment of those responsible to such a judgment at God’s appointed time. A judgment for those who at the present **sleep** in the dust of the earth.” (Daniel 12:2) In this scripture is the simple and yet profound teaching that the only hope for man is resurrection from dust nature, not merely to life, but to everlasting life.

The first man had life but obviously he did not have everlasting life, hence his death and the ultimate death of his descendants born of the same mortal nature. However when Adam and a little later Eve were formed at the beginning, they were not dying creatures. This is indicated by the law of God given to the first man and woman.

“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:
But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (Genesis 2:16-17)

Adam and Eve therefore would not die providing they obeyed and kept the law which was a most reasonable requirement. Their life was one of tranquility and abundance of provision.

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.
And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.” (Genesis 2:8-9)

THE REMNANT

The above verse shows the justice of God; man was not debarred from the ultimate blessing at that particular time, there was "the tree of life also . . ." but obviously neither Adam or Eve thought there was any urgency for seeking of its fruit which was "in the midst of the garden". Their need for it was only perceived afterwards when it was too late.

How many of their descendants have likewise sought for a way of escape after a wasted life, but have also found it too late to alter their position.

The Beginning, simply and clearly shown by God's inspired word, reveals the foundation of all that has since developed and is yet to be completed. To dismiss the account as being solely allegorical or a fabulous tale is to put away the Bible completely, for every other book or message which compile the scriptures emanate from the descriptive message of the Book of Genesis. How can the New Testament be praised and preached and the Old Testament, particularly the book of Genesis be rejected?

Pseudo religion would attempt to philosophise Genesis, but patently the Bible cannot be reconciled unless there is a complete acceptance of the whole of its testimony. Call it what men may, including the term "fundamentalism", but without such belief The Truth is lost or not obtained.

In the beginning was 'the law and the choice', and the same pattern has followed since as can be seen by the following quotations:—

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon men, for that all have sinned:

(For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, . . .". (Romans 5:12-14)

". . . I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice . . ." (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)

In God's mercy therefore life may yet be sought by making a right choice, in the hope of the resurrection of the dead.

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

“FOR THE VIOLENCE OF LEBANON SHALL COVER THEE, AND THE SPOIL OF BEASTS WHICH MADE THEM AFRAID, BECAUSE OF MEN’S BLOOD, AND FOR THE VIOLENCE OF THE LAND, OF THE CITY, AND OF ALL THAT DWELL THEREIN.”

(Habakkuk 2:17)

The ancient prophecy speaks of the violence of Lebanon. Who could deny such is the case at the present time? The T.W.A. plane abducted from Athens, and now at the time of writing grounded in Lebanon, is another incident in many incidents of violence and bloodshed. The Shi’ite extremists have brought about a difficult situation for the American administration, for even if the thirty-nine American hostages taken from the plane were to be released soon, there are seven other Americans, including the head of a news agency in Beirut, and four Frenchmen, who have been taken away in separate incidents from Beirut to the Bekaa Valley near to Baalbeck. Retaliation by the United States could bring about the death of these men for it is in the Bekaa area that Iranian revolutionary guards, sent to fight in Lebanon, have established an Islamic mini-state.

It is also significant that Libya and Iran have a pact, and that both of these Arabic nations are bent on causing trouble. Lebanon is obviously a focal point of some of their violent activities. Violence is actually breeding violence. The activities of the Irish Republican Army is being stepped up in Britain, and Sikh extremists are suspected of having caused an explosion on the Air India jet which disintegrated off the south-west coast of Ireland with the loss of three hundred and twenty nine lives.

Violent times these certainly are; “violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.” Many of the major cities of the world have become more dangerous than the jungle at night. Even in the daylight desperate activities take place. Air travel is fraught with the peril of violence; even holiday-makers at sea-side resorts come at times under threat.

So comes to pass in these perilous times what the word of God has forewarned, and the poignant cry of the prophet’s prayer becomes all the more impressive:—

“O Lord, revive (preserve alive) thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known . . .”

(Habakkuk 3:2)

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.

Alternate Week: Revelation Study.

The annual Sunday school outing is planned for August 17, to which all look forward.

Events have caused us to realize that upon each one comes trials, given in accordance with our Father's wisdom. These may differ for each one but are needed to show us our weaknesses. Gratitude is felt for help and for guidance granted in the great efforts to bear and to learn from these experiences. Only by submitting can we fulfill His purpose. How gratefully we acknowledge the supplication and coming along side by our brethren and sisters in these times of striving to be ". . . patient in tribulation".

J.A.Def.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw, Manchester.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 10.30 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 7.30 p.m.

We have applied to have our Hall for the Fraternal Gathering on Saturday, 17th August so as not to conflict with the staff Bank Holiday. We are glad to have had correspondence from the Hall management which is favourable for our future tenancy.

We take this opportunity to acknowledge the kindness of those who have sent appreciative letters.