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The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of
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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

'MY SON'

How helpful in our desire to obey and honor the Almighty we find Solomon's Proverbs. We recall that Solomon, in response to prayer, was given a great gift of God. His words are preserved to help us find and grow in this—the aggregate of the counsel of God—which we know as “wisdom”. It is striking as we listen to Solomon, how often we hear the words, “My son . . .” In fact this expression is used seventeen times in Proverbs, revealing for us the loving kindness of a father for his son. As we consider these simple words, what a depth of meaning and feeling is revealed. We can almost visualize a son with his father, looking into his face as he speaks, “My son . . .” The words which follow this loving address, express the concern and the desire to help of one who truly loves his son. In this context, let us take heed, let us absorb the help so lovingly bestowed.

In connection with Solomon's words, we think of his natural son, Rehoboam, who may have heard them from his father's lips, but failed to heed them—trusting rather in the unwise counsel of those around him. Rehoboam came to disaster, failing to value the wisdom of the Almighty. Is this not a warning and an incentive to us, Brethren and Sisters, as we seek our Father's counsel, found as He in love speaks, “My son . . .”?

Shall we now give careful thought to a few of these gems, which Solomon has left for the help of those who would please the Father?

“My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother.” Proverbs 1:8.

Instruction involves chastening, correction, rebuke, discipline. Our Father in mercy does this, which in His wisdom He knows is essential for our spiritual growth. These thoughts bring to mind Paul's warning:

“Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:”

Hebrews 12:5.

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How similar to Solomon's conveying the same chastening of the Spirit for His children. Paul continues:

“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?”

Verses 6 and 7.

To put this restraint and correction in the right perspective, Paul continues:

“Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.”

Verses 9 & 10.

How are we to profit in this? By receiving the chastening not despising it, we can grow more like Him who is our Father, as we strive to “be partakers of his holiness” remembering His injunction:

“. . . Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy.”

Leviticus 19:2.

Naturally we are not holy; but through the discipline or teaching of a loving Father, we are helped to put aside the flesh which is so unholy—and thereby hope to grow in the partaking of His holiness. This can only be accomplished as we are ready to heed what the Spirit is conveying in the simple words, “My son . . .”

Going back, we listen again:

“My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.”

Proverbs 1:10.

A wise father knows by experience how easily sinners can entice—or as the word means allure, flatter, and deceive. Our nature likes to be flattered. This appeals to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, which knows not the law of our Father. But His wisdom says to us: “My son, . . . consent thou not.” Consent is also used as to be willing or to rest content. We think of Joseph in Potiphar's house in Egypt:

“And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me.”

Genesis 39:7.

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Joseph was enticed and allured, but he listened to the instructions of the Spirit, not being willing to hear the voice of his enticer, and so refused to be drawn away. He suffered for it, was wrongfully imprisoned—but endured, trusting in His God. His example can help us as we experience how easily we can be drawn to that which is not of God. If there is a succumbing to these ever-present allurements, surely the holiness to which our Father calls us will be lost. How vital then that we take heed to His counsel: “. . . consent not.” Do not say yes—but rather say NO--to self.

The wisdom of the Spirit is further revealed for us:

“My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path.”
Proverbs 1:15.

Paul adds his counsel, enabling us to grow in this perception:

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: (those who are not seeking His holiness) . . . what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people . . .
And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

II Corinthians 6:14-18.

What agreement indeed has God’s house with the idols of mankind? And if He is to walk with us, what great care and thoughtfulness we must give to the company we seek, the pleasures and the positions to which we aspire!

Paul’s words are like the instruction of Solomon: “My son, walk not thou in the way with them.” The way of the enticer is most subtle, but is also broad and pleasing to the flesh. Jesus tells us it leads to destruction. The way of His Son is straight, narrow, denying of self—but pleasing to the Almighty, and leads to the kingdom of God. His laws are signposts along the way—help which points out the right direction to prevent our straying from that narrow way. These constraints on our flesh may seem confining and hard, but let us remember it is love for His children which causes Him to work with us, that we may become not only “good”—but with it, know peace and joy in being a “son” of the Almighty.

Our portion for this morning begins:

“My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments.”
Proverbs 3:1.

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The Father's wisdom reveals how our hearts **MUST** be involved, becoming circumcised, if His commandments are to be valued and therefore heeded. Must we not look into our hearts, Brethren and Sisters? Let us steadfastly partake of His word and thereby learn to love His commandments, because we do experience their benefit. In this effort, we shall not forget His law and will remember that here are His signposts directing our way of life.

Further, we have read this morning:

“My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction.” Proverbs 3:11.

Despise means thinking little of, being not attentive, that is, to His chastening. If God in love for those whom He calls to be His sons bestows chastening and we despise it, are we not despising Him and His loving kindness, *turning our backs upon His mercy*? This thought is further carried out as the Spirit in wisdom instructs: “. . . neither be weary of his correction.” This chastening and correction is sorely needed. Yet it is our human nature to abhor or to loathe it. When correction comes, we can react in either of two ways:

- 1) Be weary of it, abhor it, minimize it; or,
- 2) Welcome it as a blessing from the Father, and work to find the lessons—submitting until we are helped, which most certainly we will be.

As we put our minds to these considerations, we think of John speaking of Jesus' work:

“He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:” John 1:11-12.

Power to become God's sons! How? Through receiving His word, listening to the One who speaks to us: “My son . . .” What a blessing, what a power, a strength, to be allowed such a possibility. Let us be quick to receive, for there is no other way to enter into that blessed relationship. Paul gives instruction as we strive to become sons:

“For as many as are led by the Spirit, they are the sons of God.” Romans 8:14.

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To be sons, there must be a following of the Spirit's instruction, thus being led to conquer the man of flesh. Has this been our experience in a small measure this morning, as we have listened to the Father's words to His sons? Paul continues:

“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” Verse 15.

The steadfast discipline of a loving Father does not bring bondage, but a glorious relationship as sons. In the midst of chastening, they can cry out with Jesus, “Abba, Father,” revealing their great desire to be united by adoption for all time. Paul further brings out this hope of those longing for such a relationship:

“For the earnest expectation (hope) of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.” Verse 19.

When the Lord Jesus returns, all who are truly adopted to the Father as His sons will be manifested. This is our hope and earnest expectation. So then, in obedience and gratitude, shall we not respond to His chastening and instruction?

Paul, addressing his brethren in Philippi, provides strength for this struggle:

“Do all things without murmurings and disputings:”
Philippians 2:14.

Let us not argue with God, nor fret within ourselves, nor compare each other, nor blame others. It is only by accepting and responding that there is this hope:

“That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world:”
Verse 15.

How few there are who have such a hope, and what a privilege to be so blessed! Our determination must be, Brethren and Sisters, to shine as lights to each other, even in a measure to the world. Let us try hard to be children of light, sons of God amidst the present “crooked and perverse” world in which we live.

J.A.Def.

An Eagerness for Zion

We have been granted by a loving and merciful God, the privilege of reading His inspired word by the hand of Moses. These words have been recorded and protected

throughout hundreds of generations for the use of God's children. We then, striving to be His people, are instructed to take heed to these words, for by so doing we will find them a source of help and sustenance as we struggle Zionward, the land of promise.

We are given, starting in Numbers 13 the instructions of God to the children of Israel while at the edge of the wilderness prior to their entrance into the land. We should be seeking that same land, set aside by God for His children, so we can perhaps be helped by considering the account of the circumstances which prevailed at that time.

They were camped in the wilderness of Paran as God's instructions came to them to search out the land in Numbers 13:1-2:

“Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.

And Moses by the commandment of the Lord sent them from the wilderness of Paran: all those men were heads of the children of Israel.”

Only twelve representatives then, one from each tribe, heads and rulers of their people were to be sent forth as we are told in verses 18-20:

“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 holds; 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.”

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Why, we might ask, would God give such instructions to search out this land? We know it had been told to Israel many times before how the land was a rich place flowing with milk and honey, a nourishing and life sustaining land. As we consider further, perhaps the reason for God's doing so is made clear. We might well consider the apprehension in the minds of those appointed to go forth to search, and those left behind who waited for their return. At their return the congregation was gathered together to hear of the land, in verses 26-27:

“And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the Land.

And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.”

Certainly this should have been a time of great joy and thankfulness for all the people. But was it? We read further in verses 28, 29, 32, 33:

“Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.

The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, the land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.

And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.”

Instead of joy and eagerness, there was weeping and murmuring against Moses and Aaron, really against God, an outward refusal of His gift and promise to them. It was the flesh crying out, a fear for their own lives and those of their little ones, instead of trusting in God for deliverance. How empty and shallow was their anticipation and longing for the land. Here was the promised gift extended, but no acceptance of this inheritance or trust that God

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could deliver it into their hands. Would God promise them a gift that was unattainable? We know He would not.

Perhaps this is the answer to our question earlier of why the land was to be searched out. We now see the wisdom of God in giving those instructions. This served as a means of revealing the hearts and minds of those twelve spies as well as the congregation who heard the report.

To these wandering people it apparently seemed that God had not fulfilled His promise to them, had forsaken them. But this was not so, for the land did flow with milk and honey, producing in abundance everything they would need, even though inhabited. All these things were told to them through Moses in Egypt as recorded in Exodus 13:3-5:

“And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand, the Lord brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten.

This day came ye out in the month Abib. And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites and the Amorites, and the Hivites and the Jebusites, which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month.”

The land was exactly as God had promised. As God had led them through the barren wilderness feeding them with manna and water from the rock, would He now forsake them as they were ready to enter the land? No, it was not God who had forsaken them, but rather they who had forsaken God.

Obviously there was no joy found among the people, and certainly no joy for God in their actions. However, a spark of joy did exist, for two of the spies did not respond with fear for their flesh, but rather with fear of God and trust in His hand. Caleb and Joshua—the only two among the twelve who were eager to take possession of God’s promised gift.

Those who provoked God were to be smitten with pestilence and disinherited, were it not for Moses’ intervention seeking a pardon which we read of in Numbers 14:19-20:

“Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou has forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now. And the Lord said,

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I have pardoned according to thy word:”

And what was to be the fate of this rebellious nation? We read in verse 29:

“Your carcases shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me,”

But what of Joshua and Caleb the only two who brought up a good report of the land and displayed a zeal to follow God? We read of Caleb in verse 24:

“But my servant Caleb, because he had **another spirit** with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.”
and verse 38:

“But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land, **lived still.**

A different reaction from God to these two men, the difference between life and death. What made this difference? If we can discern it we too may be helped to be found in God’s delight and brought into the land as they were.

Caleb, we are told had “another spirit with him and followed God fully”. When we look up the prime root of this word “another” we find it means to loiter, to be behind or to follow. Caleb had a following spirit one which was behind God and waited on Him. It was a right spirit, an eager spirit, one ready and willing to follow wherever God led regardless of the obstacles.

Is our spirit like this? Are we ready and willing to follow God’s indication wherever it leads? Do we follow close behind Him in eager anticipation looking forward to that promised land, or are our hopes quickly dimmed by obstacles placed in our path?

We must keep our spirit behind God and follow in the strength given us by Him to overcome. For if our spirit is following fully the will of God, we will be able to go up and possess the land, “for we are well able to overcome it”.

M.C.S.

Keeping the Unity

“Observe the month of Abib, and keep the the passover unto the Lord thy God: for in the month of Abib the Lord thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt **by night.**”

(Deut. 16:1)

“By night” it was, yes, dark night over the land of Egypt in all its superstition, ignorance and obstinacy when Israel came out. Are we not also instructed to observe our deliverance? The dark night upon Egypt still exists, but we have been called out from the superstition and ignorance which once pressed upon us. So there is a meeting to remember the Lord Jesus Christ who is our passover, sacrificed for us. ‘Observe this’ then, would we not feel, is our spiritual instruction from the book of Deuteronomy. Reading on we note in verses 3-4:-

“Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.

And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days; neither shall there anything of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.”

This is surely not obsolete instruction, does it not carry forward spiritual instruction for our day and generation? “Thou shalt eat . . . unleavened bread (when remembering), even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest **remember the day** when thou camest forth . . .” Israel was not to forget that affliction, the rigour, the terror from which God alone had been able to deliver them. They had also had to hasten out; no time to make bread with leaven, only the hard unleavened composition. It was the bread of their circumstances, of the affliction of that time. How impressing then the instruction given to remind them, and help them, so that they would not forget what had happened, “. . . there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee . . . seven days . . .”

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How can we in this time follow the spirit of that early instruction and not fall into the error of an insipid custom that forgets what the keeping of it originally **really** did mean? Have we not come out of affliction and rigour? True after we came out we still had affliction and the rigour of difficulty, but so did Israel as they traversed the great and terrible wilderness of the Sinai peninsular. But the difference is that affliction and rigour in a vain meaningless existence without any real hope is a very different thing from affliction and rigour and difficulty with a true undeniable hope set before us.

The Bread and the Wine, the remembrance of Christ our Passover, was what we were to partake of, and what we were granted as soon as we came out. As a result we lost some of the comfort of "Egypt". But we also left behind a toilsome existence of a wasted life, in which, after all its labour, there was to be no hope of anything better. So to speak, then, we lost, at the time of our leaving Egypt, "the soft bread". In its place was the metaphorical hard, unleavened bread. But this was still substantial enough for the enjoyment of life with all its blessings balanced with afflictions and difficulties. Observe then, the time you came out, for it was God who brought you forth. As we partake of the provision of remembrance therefore, at the appointed times, the first day of the weeks, as Israel did the first day of the first of the months, do we still remember that it was God who so greatly and mercifully delivered the unworthy creatures that we are? Or has our remembrance grown somewhat dim by reason of familiarity? Yet it was as great a deliverance spiritually as the deliverance of Israel from the bonds of Egypt.

Moving on we find further explicit instruction quite relevant in an application for our own times in verses 5-7:-

"Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee:

But at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt.

And thou shalt roast and eat it in the place which the Lord thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents."

There was to be no indulgence to the individual who said concerning the traditional observance, 'I will remember the

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passover wherever I be.' The remembrance was to be at the place which God had chosen; that is where He had established it. Is this not the guiding factor for our time? After our remembrance we can go back to our dwellings wherever they may be; but it is at the place where God has established His Ecclesia, in which those called out are gathered together, that the feast, the Breaking of Bread, is required to be. What a wise instruction this is. If this rule were not given, then due to the inherent tendency of indolence in man, the people of God would fragment away from one another, with great loss to mutual edification and comfort. It would be a great weakening of their cohesive unity; and would that not be something of a mockery of the symbol of the unity of the one bread?

Yes, as so often declared, many members yet One Bread. But if there was a keeping of the remembrance "within **any** of (the) gates", then any could and **would** decide to do just that. So instead of the Ecclesia coming together in the one place with all the "particles" making the One Bread, symbolising and demonstrating a unified whole, there would be a scattering; and the scattering would in no way be a true and meaningful observance of that great event when God brought people out of "Egypt", as in old time, or in later times, to be together as one people; yes, even as Israel of old was brought out to be together as people of one nation. Where in this was the licence to take the passover to the place of the sick? where likewise the sanction to take the communion emblems to the sick? Of course circumstances can arise where people who have been "called out" may not be able to attend the meeting together. The law of God recognised this of old. We read in Numbers 9:10-13:-

"Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto the Lord.

The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it.

But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offering of the Lord in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin."

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We are, of course, as so often declared, not under the law; but the deep welfare in its instruction, and its understanding of human needs is surely a help to us in these latter days. A man in a journey could not attend of course, but when he could, it was still to be at the appointed place, and it was still to be on the appropriate day (that is date) of the month, when there was no impediment to his attending. But if there was no impediment to attendance, we see from the ancient record that this was a very serious offence.

How wise was this, for if one person then another failed to attend and were allowed to continue in this failure with impunity, then a trickle of absence would eventually, and perhaps quite soon, lead to a torrent of dispersion and indifference. So the unifying remembrance would be lost and an irremediable break up and scattering would ensue. What a lesson for keeping the unity is revealed in the ancient law which has been preserved for so many years.



Give Praise and Thanks

God speaking to Israel said in Deuteronomy 4:35-36:-

“Unto thee is was shewed, that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God; there is none else beside him.

Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.”

and in verse 39:-

“Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.”

And so in Psalm 95 because we know God, He says:-

“O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. (verses 1-3).

This is profitable for our meditation. We are also told in another Psalm that it is good to sing praises to our God for it is pleasant and praise is comely. For the Lord is a great God and His greatness is shown. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, ‘light be and light was’—and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth. This really is the beginning of the gospel, the good news, which ends in salvation. This thought should be a great help to us in giving praise to our God. It takes our mind forward to those symbols of four beasts—living ones—symbolic of redeemed Israel with whom we shall share if we are accounted worthy and of whom it is testified in Revelation 4:8:-

“. . . and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is to come.”

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How reasonable then is praise to God. He made us and not we ourselves, He made all things. David is brought to exclaim in Psalm 19:1:-

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.”

To men we can attribute nothing of this great power or this wisdom, and when we realise this, we too with David call upon all that is within us to bless His holy name.

We read in Psalm 95:3-5:-

“For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.”

Why should the deep places of the earth be mentioned more than the wide and flat places? What is the reason? Perhaps if there is one time more than another when we are enabled to feel our own insignificance, or tempted to doubt the power of God, it is when we have to do with the deep places of the earth. Just peeping over the mighty rocks into the dizzy depths below, breathtaking places like the Grand Canyon in the States or even Mount Snowdon in Wales, to gaze down into the dizzy depths below or from a mountain side where ships in the distance look like specks, where one false step would lead to destruction, these thoughts help us to see the wealth of meaning contained in how “In his hand are the deep places of the earth.” If in His hands are the deep places of the earth, we powerfully feel how great He is and how entirely and implicitly we also are in His hand. So also the strength of the hills; the great mountains overwhelm us with the idea of stupendous power, if the strength is His, how strong then is He, as well as wise and kind. It is not without meaning that the scriptures speak of Him as the great and dreadful God. When we do realise this, if only in a small measure, how great should be our desire to praise Him.

There is something to consider in the fact that the Psalm invites us to give praise. Surely the Spirit through David shadows forth the glorious invitation which the Captain of our salvation will address to all His brethren and through them, to all the world in

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the day of His manifestation. He has said, "In the midst of the ecclesias will I sing praise unto thee." and again "My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation." The world has not yet seen the great sight, when the Lamb in the midst of the hundred and forty four thousand, the general assembly and ecclesia of the first-born will give the signal for an outburst of praise such as has never been heard in the history of the human race. Every person in the assembly will take an enlightened and an efficient part. There will be no such drawbacks as we experience now in our midst as has been—there will be no drawing nigh with the mouth while the heart is far away.

All who take part will have been changed from the mortal and weak state to the strong who will die no more. We are looking forward, or should be, to this feast of praise. These are the days of our pilgrimage but need not be praiseless days. No—they need not be, for it is part of the calling to which we have been called, as we considered recently, to render the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. Remember, we are a chosen generation, a peculiar people, a royal priesthood even now. A part of whose vocation it is to "Show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (1 Peter 2:9)

"Today if ye will hear his voice" we are told not to harden our hearts as Israel did in the wilderness. If we shut our hearts to the beauty of praise and the sweetness of prayer, are we not hardening our hearts?

Paul applies this Psalm directly to us in Hebrews 3:12-13:-

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.
But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today: lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Does it not follow and seem reasonable that the antidote to the hardening of the heart is giving praise and thanks as we are exhorted to do:-

"O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.
Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms."

(Psalm 95:1-2)

What Is Truth? (John 18:38)

MAN AND WOMAN

Evolution, that doctrine of assumption, would have it that man and woman evolved from more primitive forms of life. It is an utterly untenable theory that two separate though similar forms could materialise at the same time from a lower order and then begin to propagate the species as now known. Furthermore, that in general, the propagaters of the human race, having evolved, should live in such a life long affinity of husband and wife. What motivation could there be for this if all is by chance and the result of aeonian process? The simple truth is:-

“And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”

(Genesis 2:22-24)

The fact is that God who has made all things, and moreover made all these things at the same point in time, designed that unlike the beasts, the special relationship of husband and wife would be a continuing phenomenon in the order of creation.

In these sordid times it is admitted there has been some break down in this deep and natural human process, but, nevertheless, marriage is still seen preponderately as one of the foundations of an evident degree of civil order in the nations of mankind.

The apologist for Evolutionism has no sound explanation for the reason of this aspect of human life; the family home, the family bond, evident even amongst those more ignorant people in isolated parts of the earth.

Why should man and woman have such a special relationship?

THE REMNANT

Leaving the spiritual lesson at one side, and everything God has made has an in-built spiritual lesson in the form or design in which it is seen, the word of God reveals God's mindfulness of man's need:-

“And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him and help meet for him.”
(Genesis 2:18)

This arrangement has always been a great blessing to man. The world would be an impossible place without it, for men and women do exercise a beneficial moderating influence upon each other, and enhance in a most sublime way, their experience of life.

Christ had no doubt whatsoever of how men and women came into existence:-

“. . . from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

And they twain shall be one flesh. . . .”

(Mark 10:6-8)

The question “Have ye not read?” might be put to the Evolutionist, but he closes his ear, though he will still persist in describing himself as a “Christian”.



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

“. . . THERE SHALL BE EARTHQUAKES IN DIVERSE PLACES, AND THERE SHALL BE FAMINES AND TROUBLES: THESE ARE THE BEGINNINGS OF SORROWS.”
(Mark 13:8)

Man is a very selfish and greedy creature. He veneers this vile trait by voluble explanations of his reasons for acting in certain ways by referring to economic necessities, practical circumstantial difficulties and wise expediencies.

The earth teems with good things, yet millions starve in one area, as food stock-piles in another.

Insurmountable barriers to policies of welfare are continually being trundled forth as being the reason for the so called inability to help the worse off when it is not so much inability as lack of any real desire to help.

Butter in stock is going rancid, potatoes are being indelibly dyed so that they cannot be placed on the market at a cheaper price after the farmer has received his subsidised remuneration. Grain storage is bulging because of what is termed over production, and irritation develops between American grain farmers and European because E.E.C. grain subsidy works unfairly in international competition against American producers.

In the meanwhile beyond such organised chaos “an absolute catastrophe” is predicted by senior officials of the United Nations Organisation. Sudan is in a desperate situation because ten million people may soon die of starvation, almost half of the population of that country. “We have the food but there is no way of getting enough to millions of starving people in some areas” said a Relief Official, adding, “. . . there is a transport bottleneck building up. The U.N.O. has been very much upfront in dealing with this, but we cannot print money. We can only deal with what we can get from the donor community . . . there simply has not been enough.” Much more is required to save many lives affected by drought in seven African countries which have lost significant production gains of recent years due to the absence of rain. There is enough food for them, indeed there is world abundance, but famine in some areas remains.

THE REMNANT

So comes to pass the prophecy "there shall be famines and troubles." How different it would be if there was war instead of saving life in peace. Commodities would then be used abundantly in a galvanised organised process, and no obstacles would be allowed to stand in the way of a rapid distribution of the means to kill.

What an indictment of man when the scripture says concerning famine and trouble ". . . these are the beginnings of sorrows."

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.

Work in the ecclesia continues to fill our lives, along with the witnessing in various ways. Though response to this witness is disappointing, the servants of God are to patiently serve, learning to wait for His outworking. In this, we unite with our brethren and they with us, hoping for the promised day.

J.A.Def.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw, Manchester.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 10.30 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 7.30 p.m.

Now the time of the last Fraternal Gathering of the year has passed which points forward to that greater gathering, we cannot help but reflect upon the absence of some, who will no longer be seen until the time of the Resurrection. This helps us to value more fully the hope which has been given to us.