

JULY 1986

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

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At the Table of the Lord

“... FREELY YE HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE”

THERE is much recorded concerning the apostles of the Lord Jesus which can strengthen our desire to more closely and faithfully follow Him. These apostles, as their title indicates, were men **sent forth** by Jesus to do the work of the gospel. Jesus carefully instructed them so they could carry on this work after His death in the way He would have it done.

It may help us to look more closely at the spirits and experiences of those twelve sent forth. We are specifically shown who they were:

“... The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.”
Matthew 10:2-4.

Most of these are very familiar names, but of some not much is recorded. Peter we know, but of his brother Andrew we know little. We are told that he heard Jesus speak and immediately looked for his brother, Peter, saying:

“... We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.”
John 1:41.

revealing his sure belief in Jesus as God's anointed Saviour.

Next we have another two brothers, James and John. Of John much is given, but of James few details are revealed. He was on the mount when Jesus was transfigured. He was also in the garden as Jesus agonized; and along with Peter and John, slept when Jesus' need was for them to watch with Him. We are told of James' death:

“... Herod the king stretched forth his hands ... And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.”
Acts 12:1-2.

No doubt this happened because of his faithful witness, and it occurred about nine years after Jesus was crucified.

The Apostle Philip also was called by Jesus:

“... Jesus ... findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.”
John 1:43.

Philip's response and faith is shown by his words to Nathanael:

"... We have found him, of whom Moses ... and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth." Verse 45.

Thomas, also called Didymus, is known as the doubter, since he questioned the risen Christ. Even so, his loyalty and devotion is clear. He spoke to his fellow apostles as Jesus prepared to go to Bethany:

"... Let us also go, that we may die with him."

John 11:16.

Another whose response is exemplary to us is Matthew the publican. When Jesus called him at the receipt of custom:

"... he arose, and followed him." Matthew 9:9.

Now publicans were detested by the Jews, being appointed by the Roman conquerors to collect tribute and taxes. The office of a publican was much sought after by many—the highest bidder usually being appointed. They were entitled to exact a fee for collecting taxes, and often abused the privilege to enrich themselves. Naturally they were ill thought of by their countrymen. Yet Jesus chose this man, and he responded without hesitation or question.

Concerning James, the son of Alphaeus, we are told that he along with Peter and John "seemed to be pillars" in the ecclesia. (Galatians 2:9) Also, when the question of circumcision and keeping the law arose, Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem for counsel. It was James who helped greatly to resolve their questions:

"After they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me:" Acts 15:13.

After hearkening, we are told it pleased the brethren to follow his counsel.

Another mentioned is Simon the Canaanite, so identified in Luke 6:15 as "Simon called Zellotes." "Zelotes" designated those who were Zealots—a "patriotic" sect of Jews—who zealously upheld the Law, and later were instrumental in a revolt against the Romans. Such in their zeal would be inclined toward rigid observance of the law and traditions of the elders.

Going on, of course almost all of mankind know of Judas Iscariot, the betrayer. Of him Jesus said:

"... Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot ..." John 6:70.

A **devil** is a false accuser, a slanderer. Also of Judas we are shown in John 12:4-6 that:

"... he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein."

Briefly these were some of the twelve apostles sent forth by Jesus, to do the work of the gospel, having been given a measure of the Spirit. They were a diverse group, of many backgrounds: Matthew a publican; Simon a Zealot; Peter was impetuous; two sets of brothers, tied together by family bonds. Each was called to be an apostle, to be "sent forth" in a great work. In this calling, there would be a need for adjustment, a "submitting one to another in the fear of God." There would be the need to put aside an inclination to despise Matthew, a publican. Simon Zelotes perhaps would be over-anxious, moved by orthodox rules—the law being ingrained in him. Thomas at times given to doubting, might hold back. Peter and Andrew, James and John being brothers, could be inclined to overly support each other. Judas Iscariot was a thief and a betrayer; he would not evoke trust in his brethren. But Jesus, who by power of the Spirit, knew their differing characteristics, called them and sent them forth. No doubt there was conflict of natural thinking, taking a lot of patience to sort out. What enabled these diverse personalities to blend, to be united in their work? Was it a recognition that Jesus required them to be witnesses for Him and His Father—not just by words, but by actions—by their living? Can this not be a help to us, Brethren and Sisters, as we are given an insight into the minds, the spirits of our brethren, as we also are called upon, in a measure, to be His witnesses? It does require adjustment, submitting, helping, counseling—a blending and a supporting as part of being one body, engaged in God's work. How great also must be our efforts to show courage and love for each other.

When Jesus sent them forth, He gave them counsel:

"... As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."
Matthew 10:7.

To **preach** is to proclaim, to publish. What were they to proclaim? The gospel concerning the kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ. Also He said:

"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: ..."
Verse 8.

They were enabled of God to do these miracles to glorify Him. And then Jesus added:

"... freely ye have received, freely give." Verse 8.

What was it that these chosen ones had received? It was the power of the Spirit, blessing from God, fellowship with Jesus—and through Him, with their Father.

THE REMNANT

On a later occasion when Jesus sent forth the seventy disciples, we are told:

“... the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.”

Luke 10:17.

No doubt they were highly elated—perhaps even feeling a bit exalted! Jesus quickly replied:

“Behold, I give unto you power ... over all the power of the enemy: ...

Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.”

Luke 10:19-20.

This is the blessing, this is the gift freely given—the divine help, the mercy provided to allow the witnessing to be faithfully done to God’s glory; and along with this work, the opportunity to be counted among His people. Does this help us, Brethren and Sisters, to more freely give of ourselves because of that which has been so unstintingly given to us? In this connection Paul reminds us:

“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

Romans 8:32.

The Father does bountifully bestow all needed things upon His children—gifts to strengthen our spirits; and also for our temporal needs He has given in abundance. The question is—Do we in response use these blessings and goods to glorify Him, to help and serve those who are His, our brethren and sisters? As we ponder this question, it brings to mind Jesus’ words of wondrous promise and hope—words we long to hear:

“... Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Matthew 25:34.

Why are these to be so blessed? Jesus speaks:

“For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.”

Verses 35-36.

When His brethren asked, How could this be? — He explained that if any of these things were done to any of His brethren, it was the same as doing it to Him. How sobering and how wonderful that we are permitted to show our love to Him so tangibly. It is in this way that we can freely give, filling the needs of our brethren and sisters, even as our needs are filled by our Heavenly Father. It must be done in the same spirit as

we are given—spontaneously, generously, and in love. We need perception in seeing needs, and a willingness to fill them. To do so will take of our time, which may already be full; it may take extra effort; it may mean putting aside something we would prefer or even need to do. But if there is an awareness of how much is done for us, there will be a readiness, a desire—indeed an urgency to give of ourselves in this way. Indeed if done for our brethren and sisters in love and gratitude, we may not even have an awareness, as we have seen in those whom Jesus blessed:

“... Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee?
or thirsty, and gave thee drink ...?” Matthew 25:37-39.

Let us clearly examine our spirits, Brethren and Sisters, for we have been given so much. Do we give willingly of ourselves—whether in the efforts to keep close and communicate (without which we cannot know needs), in our readiness to lay aside hoped-for respites or diversions, putting away individual needs for another’s hunger or thirst, or loneliness, or stumbling? Could it be that Jesus is pleased and rejoicing with what He sees? How we hope this is true.

Going on—here is what Jesus gave in additional instruction to those whom he sent forth:

“Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,
Nor scrip (a bag for food) for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.” Matthew 10:9-10.

On the surface, this may seem lacking in care, impractical; but we remember these men were sent forth by Jesus in the work of the gospel, and as He reminded them, “the workman is worthy of his meat.” God would provide for their needs. It is easy to over-worry, to over-care about temporal needs; but if the work is uppermost in our minds, will not God provide? This was Jesus’ counsel, and it is a help for us, as it was for those early brethren who were such examples.

God’s provision for Israel in the wilderness also gives us further reassurance along these lines:

“... I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon your foot ... that ye might know that I am the Lord your God.” Deuteronomy 29:5-6.

Israel must have marvelled as years went by, and their clothing and shoes endured the difficult terrain and atmosphere of the wilderness—as every need was met. But in time, the wonder may have grown dim as they became accustomed to God’s care. A warning to us to be on guard, lest we take for granted that which “freely we have received” and become slothful as to whether we “freely give.”

THE REMNANT

As our brethren, the apostles, were sent forth, how they would rejoice at the privilege, determining to be faithful witnesses, to uphold the honor of Him who had sent them. They came from diverse backgrounds, possessed different personalities, their natural thinking would be individualistic. As they went out, they would resolve to put differences away, to blend together. They would be inspired by Jesus' example, and His words—knowing and rejoicing that their names were written even now in heaven, and buoyed up by the hope of being eternally written there among His people.

Cannot the experiences, the spirits of our brethren of old help us to go forth to put our lives in the hand of the One who sends us, to freely give, having freely received? One of these brethren—John—was later granted the vision of the holy city, new Jerusalem, the Lamb's wife:

“... The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

Revelation 21:14.

How inspiring to John, what an uplift and reward after so many years of being sent forth—years of great suffering. We're privileged to share that same hope, Brethren and Sisters, if we can go forth in faith and selflessness—keeping first in our minds to freely give of that which we have so freely received.

J.A.DeF.



Repentance—A Spiritual Sacrifice

WE read in Matthew chapter 4 verse 17, that after the Lord Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, He went forth to preach:

“From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

in so few words we have summarized the essence of the work of the Lord Jesus. When we look up the word repent, we find it means to think differently. This is exactly what Jesus tried to evoke from those who would listen, that they should look on their daily lives from the Spirit's focus and not the natural focus of the flesh. He preached the spirit of the law, trying to make them see more than the surface regulations and ordinances which they had observed for years. We today are given that same help through the Scriptures, as we read of the work of the Lord Jesus, that we may perceive the spirit of God's Son and of that word, which spoke of the fulfilment of the kingdom of heaven.

Many wondered at Jesus' words for He spoke of the Spirit which was much different from the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees at that time:

“For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”
(Matt. 5:20).

Here was the difference between the spirit and the letter of the law. There was a need to go beyond the righteousness of their elders and teachers who loved the traditions of the law, but were blind to the true meaning of the Spirit. Jesus' message was simple—think differently from what you have heard—repent. Jesus said in the 17th verse of Matthew 5:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.”

To those scribes and Pharisees who listened, it may have appeared that Jesus' words advocated change. Only by the Spirit could those who “had ears to hear” perceive the need to do things differently from what they had been taught. This is important to us as well, helping us to be more spiritually perceptive, more truly able to repent.

Jesus used the law in his teaching as we read in Matthew 5:21:

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgement:

But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

Here Jesus used the law which said, "thou shall not kill", combined with the provision of the sacrifices, to enlarge their perception. When they brought a sacrifice what was in their mind? Was their ill in their heart against a brother? If so, the provision of a sacrifice under the law was of no effect—what was in their heart was more important. His words were to be a help to make them think differently as they brought their gift. The Spirit intended that the sacrifices be more than a payment made for offense, but rather a willing offering from a heart in which the love for a brother was sincere and unblemished.

After hearing Jesus preach, one of the scribes said in Mark 12:32-33:

"Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:

And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

And Jesus' answer to this man—verse 34:

"And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

What was different about this scribe? Did he perceive that the Word of God went beyond the law and the offerings and spoke of fulfilling it in love? How different his thinking was from the vast majority at that time.

Paul speaks in Romans 12:1 of how we can offer an acceptable sacrifice:

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Here we are told to examine our sacrifice — our living: to yield our natural fleshly thinking to think differently as would the Spirit in order that our bodies be acceptable before God. The Lord Jesus was not conformed to this world, but rather fulfilled the law and the prophets perfectly by submitting His body

in obedience as an acceptable sacrifice. Paul speaks further in Hebrews 13 verses 15 of the provision of Christ, the only means by which we can be found acceptable before God.

“By **him** (Christ) therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”

As the Lord Jesus brought all His living into obedience and became the perfect sacrifice, how pleasing He was to His Father. Likewise, how pleasing we too can be as we look to God for help and strength to overcome. David in Psalm 16 verses 1 and 5, recognised the need to trust in God’s provision as he says:

“Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.”
(verse 5).

“The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.”

We cannot “maintain our lot” on our own, but only as we look to God in trust for the help that He can provide. Everything that we are given is provided by God, our temporal needs are met daily and beyond that is given the hope of eternal salvation. In order to reach that hope, we need to think differently—repent, before we can bring our gift (life) to the altar.

We are required to yield our spirits in submission and obedience, keeping in mind the heritage set aside for those who can overcome. We must remember the sacrifice made by the Lord Jesus, and try to make our living also acceptable, using His life as our example as Peter tells us in I Peter 2:5:

“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

M.C.S.

The Glorious Covering

THE glorious covering that God provided is referred to in Exodus 28:2-3:-

“And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty.

And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.”

Of course the glorious covering for Aaron was the typification of that greater and more glorious covering of the future, which concerned the Faithful High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ. How glorious it was, for first of all it covered Jesus, and then was, through Him, the provision of the covering for His family.

The holy garments mean a covering set apart from all other coverings. In the finality it is the glory and the beauty of that which is yet to come.

We look at the details of Aaron's covering to see the typical showing of that glory of the only perfect covering, that came through Jesus Christ.

“And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.” (Verse 4).

The breastplate was the “choshen”, meaning—to contain or sparkle. Concerning Isaiah's prophecy of Christ he says in chapter 59:17:-

“For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.”

The breastplate was made of one piece, folded over to make a pouch. Fastened into this pouch or purse, in settings of gold, were the twelve precious stones according to the number of the twelve tribes of Israel.

The life of Jesus as we know, was bound up with the glory and welfare of Israel, of which Aaron's breastplate spoke.

The “diabolos” inside Him had temptingly suggested Jesus could have the glory of all kingdoms, at that time of His first appearing. But Jesus continued in His love for Israel, and for God's purpose with that nation. “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” He maintained the arduous course of witnessing to the nation, even though they rejected Him and

finally put Him to death. He could have dominated the nation through allying Himself with the Roman power. But His perfect life shows the rejecting of that ambition.

Next we look at the ephod which was a girdle or a girding. It was two pieces of material, joined at the shoulders by straps, or shoulder pieces, forming a kind of waistcoat or apron. It was bound around the waist by a girdle which was really part of the ephod. On each shoulder strap was an onyx stone in a setting of gold, upon each of which was engraved the names of the twelve tribes, that is, six on each shoulder. Here was symbolised the burden of all Israel borne upon the High Priest before the God of Israel.

The colour of the ephod we see as follows:-

“And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work.”
(Exodus 28:6).

These were the colours of the tabernacle. So the High Priest was identified with the very components which covered and surrounded the dwelling of God. The gold being of fine wire woven in with the other colours, and the curious girdle of the same being a skilfully woven band. We read about Christ being girded, in Psalm 45:3-4:-

“Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty.

And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach the terrible things.”

When Jesus used the sword of the Spirit it was in comprehension of truth, of meekness, of righteousness; never faltering in the wonderful blend and balance which made Him the so perfect witness and judge for the truth.

There is also the robe to consider, the me-hael, the covering. So we read in Isaiah 61:10:-

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.”

The robe of righteousness was indeed Christ's glorious covering, seen throughout His life, which never allowed sin to appear from inside, or from underneath. The brodered coat and mitre are also another consideration. They were a coloured interwoven garment and a diadem or turban.

There was nothing dull about the life of Christ, even though He lived in such meekness. His colourful life is surely represented by the broided coat of Aaron. And concerning the mitre we read:-

“His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish.” (Psalm 132:18).

Jesus carried the crown of His exemplary walk before Israel. Oh yes, He was despised, but even His enemies had to say, “Never man spake like this man.” And though a crown of thorns was subsequently thrust upon Him, His birth to be a King shined through it all.

So as we consider the garments of Aaron, for glory and for beauty, which typified the greater covering of the greater High Priest, we are shown that we can also be covered through Him with garments not of this earth, For His suffering, His glory, His deliverance from death, means that He bears His people’s remembrance before The Most High, and through Him there is a covering for the Family of God.



A Bible Class

“MY STEPS HAD WELL NIGH SLIPPED.”

(Psalm 73:2)

THE 73rd Psalm is entitled “A Psalm of Asaph”, or a song of the Gatherer. Immediately thoughts go to the gathering that has been promised in God’s purpose to those found acceptable at the judgement seat of the Lord Jesus. Those responsible, who have faithfully struggled to overcome their flesh during their lifetime, will be granted the blessing of life eternal, while those who have succumbed to the power of the flesh will be sentenced to destruction.

This psalm was written by David, a man who knew only too well the struggle that the flesh creates. He failed grievously during his lifetime and knew suffering because of it. This psalm then is David’s very human cry, as he momentarily envied those in the world who knew not the suffering required to overcome the flesh as verses 3-5 and 13-14 relate:

Verse 3-5:

“For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men.”

Verses 13-14:

“Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.”

In the midst of trial and testing the flesh can taunt with this kind of thinking. Envy can grow when looking at those in the world who are not bound by restrictions on their flesh, but live only unto themselves. Their lot seems easier than the struggle which those hoping to be God’s children must endure.

David’s right spirit taking over, puts this kind of thinking to an end when he says in verse 17 and 18:

“Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.”

Their life may seem to prosper as they enjoy the riches and entertainments of this world, but what of their end? Those of the world have no hope, they meet their end in the grave. David realized that only those covered by the protection of the sanctuary have the hope of resurrection and eternal life, but only as they struggle against their flesh in this life.

THE REMNANT

Many times David failed, slipped and lost his footing, was close to losing the hope of God. We can see his mind as he must have thought of these failings and realized how merciful God had been to him as we read on in verses 22-24:

“So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou has holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.”

Indeed, as David in verse 2 says:

“But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.”

Where would David have been without the strength of God to hold him up? The flesh fails, it has no real strength. Only in God is there the strength to lean on to see one through trials and testing.

In Psalm 94:17-18 David again praises God as the source of his strength saying:

“Unless the LORD had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.”

How easy it is to fall into the trap of complaining or comparing one's lot with others. Any can look enviously as David did, on those of the world who do not trouble themselves to control their flesh. It is true they do not struggle, but it is also true they have no hope of sharing in the blessing God has held out for those who will be His at that gathering, a time when struggles will cease and the glory of God will fill the earth.

M.C.S.



“Be ye followers of me...”

(1 Cor. 11:1)

IT is written, “He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but the companions of fools shall fall.” The Apostle Paul as we know was no fool, rather was he one of the wise whom we will do well to walk along with if we too are to be wise, for it is quite plain to see that Paul is an example for us to follow, and a model for us to copy. In Acts chapter 9 we have Christ’s view of Paul which is most enlightening, as we read from verses one to fifteen, —he is a chosen vessel unto me, and so a man chosen by Christ must needs be a safe example for every servant of the Lord Jesus to follow, and his writings are not only the writings of a wise man but were, as recorded in chapter 14:37—“... the commandments of the Lord” and as he says earlier — “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” He was not always so, but the sense in which he means it is made abundantly clear in his writings to Timothy in 1 Tim. 1:12-15 & 16:-

“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.”

To the Philippians he says, “Those things which ye have both learned and received and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.” Reiterating his words, Be ye followers of me. And in his second letter to Timothy:-

“But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” (2 Timothy 3:10-12).

So the wise cannot escape the suffering. But verses 14, 16-17 say:-

“But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

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, throughly furnished unto all good works.”

Certainly Paul has much to teach us, being such a wonderful example and could say at the end of his probation, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.”—What a wonderful thing to be able to say, and we also can say the same if we are wise. We also can have the same glorious hope of the Apostle Paul, providing we take heed to Christ’s instruction through Paul—“Be ye followers (i.e. companions) of me.”



What is Truth? (Part 11)

(John 18:38)

“By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found ...” (Hebrews 11:5).

THE Epistle of Jude tells us that the seventh generation from Adam brings us to Enoch, and that Enoch was a prophet with a grave warning. Enoch told his contemporaries, “Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”

This information reveals how quickly mankind, in their earliest history, caused the earth to be an ungodly place. Enoch however “walked with God”, but while he was yet a comparatively young man “... he was not; for God took him.” (Genesis 5:24) There have been some who have thought this this means that Enoch did not die. Such exposition is in error for it is plainly declared, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned ...” (Romans 5:12).

No man then in the past, including the Son of God, has been made an exception to this rule. This is a fundamental truth, and so another explanation has to be found for what happened to Enoch. The Epistle to the Hebrews says, “Enoch was translated that he should not see death.” But a few verses later, in the same chapter, it is specifically stated that he died, for “These all died in faith, not having received the promises ...” (Hebrews 11:13) What then was his translation? Surely that he was conveyed away from his sufferings in the presence of man, but to die in that sleep which awaits the resurrection of the dead, for “... he was not; for God took him”, which event reminds us of that later time when Moses the man of God was taken away from his people. “And he (God) buried him (Moses) in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day ... his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.” (Deuteronomy 34:6-7).

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

“...upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexities...”
(Luke 21:25).

MAN having made the most awesome of weapons turned to harness the atom as a means of providing electrical power. He doubtless felt that a peaceful use of this dreaded thing would be a reason and an excuse for his scientific savagery. Then at Cumbria a number of years ago there was a mistaken nuclear discharge and an area around the little township of Seascale became contaminated and it was found necessary to throw large quantities of milk away. Any apprehension that the public might have felt was soothed away by confident scientific statements that it was a minor event and everything was alright and would be alright. It was not until a much later time that the significance of fall-out in Norway and Sweden from the incident at Windscale made its impact. But then it was old history, though the fruits of the event was being seen in an increase of Leukaemia in the Seascale area and in Northern Ireland just across the sea from Windscale.

Not having perceived the significance of the Cumbrian incident, Britain began to build other nuclear power stations. The United States as well had a programme of its own and Russia followed the trend, France and West Germany also. Conventionally fired power stations as a result were allowed to run down and be dismantled.

But distress and perplexity was to come.

Chernobyl power station in the Ukraine had a nuclear fire. The Russians found themselves in a great dilemma. If they told their people the full facts at the time of the initial occurrence there could be mass panic. On the other hand the seriousness of the radiation escape could not be hidden, for Sweden quickly detected fall-out on its territory. The struggle to damp down the burning nuclear pile then commenced. The difficulty was that firemen could not get near to the conflagration without being seriously exposed to radiation. Finally clay, sand and lead was dropped from the air, while tunneling underneath the plant took place to lay a concrete apron or barrier. So at last the grave threat to Europe was contained. Western European nations including Britain had however experienced fall-out; what was less well known was the closing of a reservoir at Vancouver because of unusually high radio-active levels, fifty per cent more than normal, exceeding permitted safety levels.

THE REMNANT

The Chernobyl accident, then, had covered in its effect a very wide area.

The question was raised in the British Parliament that if an incident at a Russian power station should cause such trouble what would result from nuclear bomb explosions. In any case, people were beginning to suggest there were too many nuclear electric power stations in the earth, all holding a greater or a lesser threat of repeating the Russian incident; for in America for example, it was stated, there are seven nuclear reactors which are similar to the Chernobyl design in not having container domes to stop the spread of radiation in the event of an accident.

The world's folly is thus coming to fruition upon an earth in distress and perplexity, as foretold by Jesus Christ.



News from the Ecclesias

EDEN, NEW YORK, Grange Hall, Church Street.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m.

Sunday School 1.45 p.m.

Bible Class: Midweek: Forestville, Orchard Park, Hamburg.

Alternate Week: Revelation Study.

The death of our sister Ethel Heason brings sorrow but comfort in that she awaits the return of the Lord Jesus in hope of eternal life, free from pain, sorrow and tribulation.

Guidance is sought in the special witnessing which is planned through newspaper advertising addressed to any who are seeking to know more of the Almighty's purpose and message in the Bible.

J.A.DeF.

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MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw, Manchester.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 7.30 p.m.

We are advertising a booklet on the message of the Bible, in the Midlands area and it is hoped to go further afield should time permit and according to indication.

It is a satisfaction to know that endeavour to witness, even though it is a time of a famine of hearing the Word, is nevertheless the work going forth whether they hear or whether they forbear.