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# The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of  
Papal and Protestant Christendom

A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

**“Take heed that ye be not deceived”**

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## At the Table of the Lord

*"WHO AGAINST HOPE BELIEVED IN HOPE ..."*

**I**N his epistle to the Romans, Paul especially addressed the faithful brethren there:

"To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace ...". Romans 1:7.

Paul not only wrote to them, his brethren, but also he longed to see them:

"... I make mention of you always in my prayers; Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you." verses 9,10.

It was about three years later that this was allowed when Paul was taken as a prisoner to Rome:

"... when the brethren (in Rome) heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage." Acts 28:15.

Paul was comforted and encouraged by the actual coming along side of his brethren, who made the forty mile journey from Rome to meet him on the way. These brethren were no doubt moved to do so by their love for Paul who had so greatly cared, and had written to help them as we are reading today. We, Brethren and Sisters, can also find help in their epistle which has been preserved for just such a purpose.

The apostle used the example of Abraham to strengthen their faith in the God of Israel.

"... Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Romans 4:3.

To count gives the thought of taking an inventory, and is also used as to impute, number, or reckon. Does not God watch over those who are striving to be His children, look into their hearts and count up, or take an inventory of what He finds there? As He searched the heart of Abraham, he found a trusting belief—expressed not in just words but actions. Taking this into account He was pleased—imputing this unto Abraham as righteousness. That Abraham's heart was right reminds us of Paul's words written to his brethren in Rome:

"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the latter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Romans 2:28-29.

This reveals how God looks on the heart, takes inventory of what He sees there, praising those who are struggling to cut off the flesh in their minds and in their living.

We remember it was to Abraham that the sign of circumcision was given when he was ninety-nine years old, as God said to him:

“... I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly ... thou shalt be a father of many nations.”  
Genesis 17:2-4.

In confirmation, God changed his name from Abram to Abraham, meaning father of many nations, and as a token said:

“... ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you”.  
verse 11.

A token is a mark or a sign—such was the circumcision of which God further said:

“He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: ... And the uncircumcised ... soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.”  
verses 13-14.

Cut off from his people would mean cut off from God, would involve losing the hope of Israel and salvation. The circumcision that is inwardly, of the heart, in the spirit, is the substance of that token; if this inward circumcision is missing, a cutting off from God is truly confirmed.

If we look at the words Paul uses, outwardly and inwardly, we can better perceive what he had in mind. Outwardly is made up of three words, 1. in, 2. the, 3. appearance, while inwardly is two words, 1. in, 2. hidden or secret. Does this illustrate for us the difference between the letter and the spirit? The letter is outward, sometimes making a good appearance of things, while inward is of the hidden part, the spirit, the heart.

Paul's use of circumcision to teach of the spirit of the law is particularly appropriate as we think of Abraham at ninety-nine years of age, given a covenant and the token of circumcision. Remember God promised:

“I ... will multiply thee exceedingly ... thou shalt be a father of many nations ... I will make thee exceeding fruitful, ... make nations of thee, ... and give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, ... for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

Genesis 17:2-8.

This was a renewal of the promises originally made to Abram, as he in obedience departed out of Haran at the age of seventy-

five. As this promise was renewed twenty-four years later, he still had no seed. What great faith it would taken on Abraham's part to believe that at ninety-nine he could still have a son. Yet God further said:

“... I will bless her (Sarah), and give thee a son also of her: ... and she shall be a mother of nations; ...”

Genesis 17:16.

We are told when he heard this he:

“... fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?”

Genesis 17:17.

Our brother's reaction was a natural one, based upon the outward appearances. But his thinking changed, for as Paul has told us:

“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.”

Romans 4:3.

Can we enter into Abraham's mind as at this great age he heard God repeat this promise and give this token of a covenant. “How can I have a child, I'm too old — its impossible”, he may have felt. But we have to remember as did Abraham that “... with God nothing shall be impossible”. Abraham “believed”—what a lot this tells us. By believing, he evidenced that his putting away of fleshly doubts was not just outward, but was firmly entrenched in the hidden part — in his heart.

Paul further wrote of our brother:

“Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; ...”

Romans 4:18.

Against hope—every logical fact was against Abraham having a seed. Sarah had been barren all her life—how could she, now at ninety, possibly bear a son? They had hoped and no doubt prayed for an heir all their lives together, and still in their old age there was none. Yet, Paul continues:

“... being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, ... neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb:

He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; ... therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness:”

Romans 4:19-22.

What help we find for ourselves, Brethren and Sisters, as we realize how weak in faith and in hope we are; how much we need to grow in these qualities which manifest the inward thoughts, the circumcising of our hearts, cutting off the doubts and fears of the flesh and relying on the word of God, the promises of our Father. Of Abraham, Paul reveals that he: “... against hope believed in hope ...”.

We may ask, what is hope? The dictionary tells us it is “a feeling that what is wanted to happen *will* happen.” The concordance reveals that hope consists of anticipation and firm expectation. Abraham clearly believed what God had promised and that what he wanted to happen would happen. Hope comes through trust. We also know that hope develops through and with love. We remember Paul’s words:

“Love ... hopeth all things, ...” I Corinthians 13:7.

Thus hope generated through love, enables an enduring of much trial by looking ahead to the culmination of that which is longed for. Paul when imprisoned in Rome, called together the Jews to teach them and said:

“For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.” Acts 28:20.

The hope of Israel—Elpis Israel—enabled Paul to endure all the griefs, the hardships and dangers which he was called upon to face. How vital then is hope, being an evidence of a circumcised heart, one which cuts off the wavering thoughts and despairs to which we are so prone.

David knew this weakness, crying out:

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me?” Psalm 42:5.

Cast down means sinking, depressed, and is used as bowed down. Don’t we at times feel very low with many burdens, brought about by the weakness of our flesh and by our failures? David also wrote that he was disquieted or raging, troubled. This word is often used to describe the waves of the sea in their roaring and turmoil, yet beating themselves out on the shore, their bounds set by the Almighty. We are shown this aspect in God’s words through Jeremiah:

“Fear ye not me? saith the LORD: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?” Jeremiah 5:22.

The reaction of our flesh at times is like the roaring sea, restless, tossing about, turmoiled to no avail against the decrees of our Father. What is the antidote to this painful and distressing state? David shows us:

“... hope thou in God:” Psalm 42:5.

Hope in the Old Testament also is used as to stay, to trust, to wait. It takes a readiness to wait on God, believing that what He

has promised will be done. As a sign of that conviction in His promise, we are to labor and grow to become circumcised in heart, in the spirit, not in the letter. We are to be spiritual Jews, that is praising Him who has made it all possible.

How fitting then is the example of Abraham, used by Paul to help his Roman brethren and to help us today. As we strive to be Jews inwardly in covenant relationship with the God of Israel, our hearts must be gentled, becoming more stable, exhibiting acceptance, and correction which will nurture the sure increase in trust such as Abraham so clearly exhibited. At times our flesh may rebel, become troubled, disquieted, robbing us of the ability to endure.

Hope then is that quality of spirit which enables us to put down such strong and contrary reasonings. Hope is the evidence that we are endeavouring to cut off all that interferes with the spirit growth in our hearts. This is possible because of love for our Father even as we have seen in Abraham who, though sometimes doubting, nevertheless did the works which were counted unto him as righteousness.

Paul tells us:

“... now abideth faith, hope, charity (love), these three;  
but the greatest of these is charity (love).

I Corinthians 13:13.

It was this love which helped Abraham to “against hope believe in hope” and which can help us endure the trials placed upon us in these last days, that we may bring forth works which bear the inspection of a loving and ever faithful Father. If we are allowed to know the fulfillment, the accomplishment of that hope in His kingdom, we will be able to tell Abraham, David and Paul how much their example, their circumcision of heart helped us to carry on and believe in hope.

*J.A.DeF.*

## Signs of the Time

**WE** read in Matthew chapter 24 of the signs of the coming of the Lord Jesus. In relation to events today in the world, we question as did the disciples—when will it be? The entire twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew focuses on that time of return. Jesus gave the parable of the fig tree — an example of common sense that when the leaves push forth we know that summer is at hand. Likewise, when we see these signs spoken of in Matthew chapter 24 occurring in the world, we know that His return is near.

We need to be mindful of the circumstances heralding His return since no one knows the time or the hour:

“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.” Matthew 24:36.

This time will come as a thief in the night, without fanfare or advance warning. We are given these signs as a warning only of the approximate time. As we read on in the chapter we are told His return will be as in the days of Noah, a time when there was little regard to the word of God (as today). No one listened to Noah during his one hundred and twenty years of ministry. They were not concerned with changing their ways, their minds were full of their own activities.

“And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” Genesis 6:12-13.

At the time of Noah there was little technical sophistication compared to the wonders of today when we see how the effects of one nuclear reactor accident in Russia poses danger for the entire world. This world has advanced to a stage of sophistication that makes man capable of destroying himself. Of course the signs of His coming do not specifically mention nuclear disasters, but other signs do tell of His imminent return. We know the message of His purpose, that the earth is to be inhabited during the kingdom age and will be given as a legacy to His people. Therefore common sense tells us that God will not allow man to destroy it.

Jesus' message is clear, we must watch or be on guard, as that word means, alert to the signs about us.

“Watch, therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of man cometh.” Matthew 25:13.

More importantly we must look within us to see what is there.

“Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.” Matthew 24:44.

We are helped when we look up this word ready, to see that it means to be fit or adjusted. The thought of adjusted is significant, for this means to make modifications — we must be adjusted to suit His purpose. What does He desire? Simple belief as verses 45 and 46 of the chapter confirm:

“Who, then, is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

Those who believe and are wise in the ways of God adjust their hearts and minds and are prepared, striving to be found fit at His return. What happens then? Verse 46 goes on to tell us:

“Blessed is that servant, whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.”

What is it that they are doing? They, by being faithful and wise are striving to apply the word of God in their living.

The danger today is to disregard the signs about us, yet we are reminded in Matthew chapter 24 of the evil servant who had no perception of the signs around him of his lord’s return. What did he do?

“But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;  
And shall begin to smike his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken,  
The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of.  
And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”  
Matthew 24:48-51.

A hypocrite is one who pretends to be what he is not. He does not look within himself and see the adjustments needed. If we can watch and be ready or be adjusted we will be helped. When the Lord Jesus preached, He often rebuked the scribes and Pharisees as being hypocrites. They knew the word of God but did not adjust and apply the spirit of it in their living.

In Matthew 25 we have the parable of the five wise and five foolish virgins. What was the end result of the five wise virgins who had watched and were prepared?

“And while they (the five foolish) went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they *that were ready* went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut.”

Matthew 25:10.

In I Thessalonians 5:2-8 Paul fortifies this same message:

“For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.

But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

Ye are all children of light, and children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

Therefore, let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that are drunken are drunken in the night.

But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and, for an helmet, the hope of salvation.”

We see summarized here the same REM message — that there is the need to be a child of light and to be aware of the circumstances about us that we may be ready—sober. To be sober means to be of sound mind, self-controlled. This thought is similar to being adjusted or ready with control over ourselves.

In a natural sense, the breastplate is worn over the heart to protect. Is this saying we must have our heart on the things of God—and the helmet as a protection that the mind and the heart be joined in purpose on God’s ways? What are we to be ready for? Revelation 19:7 tells us:

“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his *wife hath made herself ready.*”

This thought is identical in essence to the Lord Jesus’ words in Matthew. The lesson here is to fortify us to be ready, for only those who are ready will be suitable to be the bride of the Lamb. This is the promised blessing of the saints, but readiness must be displayed now in this life in those who would hope to be found approved. It is easy to overlook this need, for the flesh is prone to grow complacent.

We know the signs in the world about us and can see within our hearts the signs of our own flesh that must be adjusted or controlled. Let us make sure the hope of salvation is always before our eyes, for in that hope alone is the blessing of everlasting life.

M.C.S.

## False Profession

**W**E cannot listen to more appealing words than those recorded in Romans 10:1:-

“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.”

Why did he speak in this way? Surely the reason is obvious by what follows. There were those who were erring respecting the Mosaic law. They were not putting the things which belong to divine truth first, which means that they had lost their first love of the gospel. God was therefore not uppermost in their hearts. What were Paul’s comments on this state of affairs? The answer to this question is to be found in the next verse which reads:-

“For I bear them record (the keepers of the Mosaic law) that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.”

How are we to understand this phrasing? For it is clear that they did not necessarily desire the things of the world, yet there was something lacking. The answer is in the original which reads —“not according to the full knowledge.” In other words their appreciation of the Truth was not as deep as it should have been nor their understanding of the seriousness of what God requires of His people. Therefore they were in need of correction for their Judaising sympathy as the next verse shows:-

“For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”

This proves all such Judaisers, gentile believers inclined to Judaism, and those whose lives in these latter times have a spiritual similarity were and are wrong on two points—1.) Establishing their own righteousness, and 2.) Not submitting to the requirements of God. Establishing their own righteousness means that they only wanted the Truth on their own terms. There are many in the apostasy like this, whom Paul had in mind when he said, “They have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof.” Therefore the question which arises is, what will happen in the day of judgment? Can they really hope to receive salvation? Is Christ so divided? Can the self-deceived who walk in sins of ignorance continue (if unrepented of) to their ultimate salvation? This is answered by Christ in John 15:6 and 14:-

“If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

We also find the same instruction contained in the words of the second Epistle of John verse 9:-

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. ...”.

These verses are clear, comprehensive and final. To remain in such a state (unrepented of) means that all hope of salvation is lost and rejection at the judgment seat will be the end of such.

We read in Romans 1:9-10:-

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

The sad position of some, however, is also defined in verses 16-17:-

“But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

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

As the scriptures say, Without faith it is impossible to please God. What then does God require? There is only one way to please Him, and that is, the right way. What was Christ's answer? He said, “I am the way, the truth and the life.” In John 1:9-12 we also read:-

“That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

But as many as received him (Christ), to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

Unless we believe the Bible with all that this means and all its aspects, we are in darkness and without hope of salvation. Human excuse or philosophy or a kind of Judaising against its pure standard, place such double mindedness outside the scope of God's saving grace.

W.G.B.

## The law of Moses and its teaching of fellowship

It is recorded:-

“What man soever there be of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp,

And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the Lord; before the tabernacle of the Lord; blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people.” (Leviticus 17:3-4).

It is to be noted that blood guilt was confined to the slaying of animals used in the sacrifices for the House of God—the ox, the lamb, or the goat. Wild animals obviously were not being referred to, which were not required or accepted for sacrifice. This is corroborated by verse 5:-

“To the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the Lord, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest, and offer them for peace offerings unto the Lord.”

Let us note, however, that this command related to the camp in the wilderness. When Israel arrived in the promised land and were scattered throughout it in the twelve tribes thereof, the law of God reasonably allowed them the latitude of partaking of meat in the places where they lived, without the necessity of journeying first to Jerusalem. What then is the spirit's teaching in this command relating to the wilderness journey? Further detail is given as follows:-

“And the priest shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar of the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and burn the fat for a sweet savour unto the Lord.

And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations.”

(verses 6-7).

Do we not see from all this that a diversifying of the Lord's sacrifice was not to be allowed. There was to be only one place of worship—one altar—one table and one lightstand. To allow the people latitude because they were perhaps on the fringe of the camp would be contrary to God's instruction. In fact it was so important that they keep the command, that the soul that turned from it was to “be cut off from among his people”. Such would be blood guilt if they persisted in this failure.

Coming to the new testament can we then see the spirit of the command in the following words:-

“Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”

(Hebrews 10:29).

To go outside the camp and become joined to another sacrifice, which is not the Lord's sacrifice, though it is no doubt purported to be so, would be the equivalent, would it not, of the blood guiltiness of those inclined to despise the House of God, the tabernacle of witness, in the wilderness of old?

So the law of Moses, the schoolmaster of the spirit is most specific:-

“And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you, that offereth a burnt offering or sacrifice, And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the Lord; even that man shall be cut off from among his people.” (Lev. 17:8-9).

Do we not see from this how fallacious it is to declare that when individuals move from one purported “fellowship” to another, they will be all right because all the fellowships are serving God in one way or another. Moses' law declared most specifically that there was to be one House of God, one place of offering, one table of shewbread, and one lightstand. Further teaching is also to be noted in verses 15-16:-

“And every soul that eateth that which died of itself, or that which was torn of beasts, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger, he shall both wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean.

But if he wash them not, nor bathe his flesh; then he shall bear his iniquity.”

To partake and share of the dead was shown by God to be wrong. Is this a mere coincidence that it is found in the same chapter and the same context of what has just been considered?

Turning to the Spirit's message in the new testament, we find in Revelation 3:1-5:-

“And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write: These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain,

that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

We note from these words, that Sardis was dead. The fact that it had a name that it lived was of no efficaciousness whatsoever. Of course it does say, "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die." But in what way were they to do this? The spirit in law of Moses says, "But if he wash not, nor bathe his flesh" after partaking in the dead, "... then he shall bear his iniquity." Taking this type therefore to Sardis is it not reasonable to infer that if the weak few, who yet remained, had not washed themselves of Sardis, they would likewise have borne their iniquity by reason of unresponsiveness to put away their contact with that which was dead?

A former pre-eminent leader, of what was the truth, had this to say:-

"You will be in no danger of obeying the truth in the fellowship of ... the Birmingham Ecclesia, even should this ecclesia be as dead as the church in Sardis, if you walk worthily you will be saved ...."

How contrary to the spirit of the law. It is the watchful statement so commended to the members of Sardis? How could the beguiled with the dead, those in contact have undefiled garments? Leviticus says, "he shall both wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean." After washing there was to be a period of establishing that removing from the defiled position—"... then he (shall) be clean" at evening, when the day had passed. It was only those with undefiled (washed) garments in the city of Sardis, who were to walk with Christ, having clean garments.

To such was the promise of the future of being clothed in white raiment, when the book of life is revealed to show who are the undefiled of the Lord.

What a help then, is the ancient law, pointing out even to these times the way of the Lord, who said to Israel, "I am the Lord your God."

## A Bible Class

“IT IS THE GLORY OF GOD TO CONCEAL A MATTER”

(Proverbs 25:2)

**T**HIS subject is found in Proverbs. These wise sayings, as the word means, were written by Solomon who was given great wisdom by the Almighty. God’s purpose in Proverbs is found in the first few verses of this record:

“The proverbs of Solomon ... To know wisdom and instruction ... To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and equity; ... A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: ... Proverbs 1:1-5.

The particular facet of this wisdom to be considered is:

“It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: ...”

Proverbs 25:2.

To *conceal* means to hide, to keep close, to keep secret. We might well ask: Why would it be to God’s glory to conceal a matter? Perhaps an answer can be found in the words of the LORD to Moses as He made a covenant with Israel prior to their entering the land. As a part of that covenant Moses said:

“The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us ... that we may do all the words of this law.”

Deuteronomy 29:29.

Indeed the secret things are God’s; He in love reveals some of them to those who value that covenant-relationship with Him and yearn for His counsel. To others who do not seek it, these wonders of God remain hidden.

The Lord Jesus in His teaching often spoke in parables. Why did He do so? His own words show us:

“... Unto you (His disciples) it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might see not, and hearing they might not understand.” Luke 8:10.

The precious things of the kingdom of God are hidden from those who—in failing to value—do not seek them. This was true not only in Jesus’ teaching, but also in that of the prophets who were sent to Israel. For example, when Isaiah responded to God’s call saying, “Here am I; send me”—God’s reply was:

“... Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.”

Isaiah 6:9.

Israel, because their fleshly hearts were comfortable and satiated, could not be touched, failed to be converted from their evil ways, and therefore the things of God were concealed. These particular gifts of God are precious, to be disclosed only to those who seek them, who recognize that through this mercy is the hope of salvation! Paul realized this and wrote to his brethren in Rome:

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.

For who hath known the mind of the Lord? ... For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: *to whom be glory for ever ...*” Romans 11:33-36.

It is indeed the glory of God to conceal a matter, revealing it only to those who seek Him, seek to be bound to Him; who hope in His promises and desire to give glory to their Lord.

The rest of the verse under consideration further helps our understanding:

“... but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.”

Proverbs 25:2.

As it is to God's glory to conceal a matter, so to search out a matter can bring honor (or glory) to His diligent people. To *search out* means to penetrate, and it is also used as find out, seek, try. Does this tell us that in order to find the concealed things of God, we must try—search with fervent desire to break through the wall of our human ignorance; and in so finding God's ways, then allow them to penetrate our heart? How can we do this? The appeal of David gives a clue:

“*Search* me, O God and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: ...”

Psalm 139:23.

We need the Father to search the hearts of His children, revealing any wicked way which would hinder their own works toward Him and prevent their understanding of His ways. It is with a measure of this same penetration that we must search for the concealed things of God, which He will reveal in His mercy.

Did not Jesus encourage His disciples:

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: ...”

Matthew 7:7.

In our searching there must be a realization that naturally we seek after things which please ourselves rather than God. Jeremiah reminds, that we might more fully perceive this:

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

Jeremiah 17:9.

The clear answer to the prophet's question is found:

“I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, ...”

Verse 10.

As the Almighty searches and reveals what is in the heart, so must His children search out a matter, desiring to put away the deceits natural to man.

The Proverb tells us: "... the honour of kings is to search out a matter." We know this does not apply only to human rulers, but to those who hope for the honor and glory of becoming kings and priests with the Lord Jesus when He returns. Let us apply our hearts to know wisdom, the hidden things of God. Let us lay aside some of the distracting interests which can displace the care and time He would have us give to His precious word and ways. Shall we not then hope to be accounted acceptable at the judgement seat of the Lord Jesus, and to forever give to Him and reflect from Him that glory which was ever His alone?

*J.A.DeF.*

### Paul's letter to the Hebrews

**T**HE name Hebrews is derived from a root meaning sojourners, and speaks not of the natural seed of Abraham, but those like him, walking and doing the works of Abraham. The letter tells us that they are a people strong in faith, perceiving and believing the greatness of the promises of God, faith enabling them to see a day in which those promises would have fulfillment. So real is it to them that it is testified of them "that they were persuaded of them and embraced them" and to such the Apostle writes in the closing chapter, Hebrews 13:22:-

"And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: ...."

Is not then the whole of this letter an exhortation? The question is, are we among those who are called Hebrews? If so, then the exhortation must be for us. The letter opens in chapter 1:1-2:-

"God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,  
Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

An obligation then is on us. We must remember that the word spoken in times past was confirmed and steadfast and those who transgressed or disobeyed received a just recompense of reward. In many there was an evil heart of unbelief causing them to depart from God. Many carcasses fell in the wilderness. One particular case comes to mind recorded in Numbers of those that failed to maintain their state of separation required by God. They succumbed to the teaching of Balaam.

For a period of 1500 years the law was in operation which was a period of apostasy—why is this record preserved? That we should take heed lest there be in any one of us an evil heart of

unbelief. Sin in its working is very deceitful. That is one point to remember. The other is that by nature our heart is likewise deceitful.

“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.”

(Hebrews 2:1-3).

“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.” (ch. 3:1-2).

Here the contrast is made between Jesus and Moses. Moses truly was a faithful servant in the erection and service of the house of God. But what of Jesus? He is the Son, and as a son He is over His own house. A house comprised of living people which are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone. We are parts of the house—if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. Here then is the need for exhortation, lest we become hardened, and fail to hold the beginning of our confidence unto the end.

We read in chapter 3:7-19 the contrast between the time of Moses and Joshua, and the work of Christ. Joshua led the people into the land and gave them inheritance. But the true rest still remains for the people of God. Jesus, the antitype of Joshua will truly give rest. Some in times past failed to enter into the inheritance. An example to us, warning of the hardness of the human heart, and so the exhortation is given by the Apostle, in chapter 4:7 & 11:-

“Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, Today, after so long a time; as it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”

Is this not likening the hardness, or comparing the hardness, with unbelief? If the heart becomes hard it cannot receive the Divine impress—and therefore fails to believe God’s word which alone can make one wise unto salvation.

## What Is Truth? (Part 12)

(John 18:38)

### THE ANCIENT GENEALOGY

**I**T is easy to pass over the names of those descending from Adam in the period between Adam and that universal flood which came in the days of Noah, without little further thought other than that they are a record of a certain duration of time in the purpose of God with this earth.

But there are lessons to be learned. "Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth." (Genesis 7:6). This fact enables us to work out how near Noah's father and grandfather came in their span of life to that awesome event. Lamech the father of Noah was a hundred and eighty two years old when Noah was born, he then lived a further five hundred and ninety five years and "begat sons and daughters" who would be brothers and sisters of Noah; they by rejecting Noah's message perished in the flood. This, in itself, is a lesson. Those sons and daughters neither maintained the faith of their father, (who by reason of being named in the genealogy would be a man of faith) nor responded to the Truth's appeal of their brother. Grandfather Methulelah was a hundred and eighty seven years of age when Lamech was born, and therefore was three hundred and sixty nine years old when his grandson Noah was born. As Methuselah lived six hundred years after the birth of his grandson, that is five years longer than his son Lamech, Methuselah died in the six hundredth year of Noah just as the flood was about to take place.

Why was he named Methuselah by his prophet father, Enoch? Those names had a particular significance in that early age. Muwth—to die: Shalach—send. — When he is dead it shall be sent! Common translation—"man of a dart", Shelach—missile (of attack). Which ever way we look at it there is a significance, for the strike against the prevailing wickedness came in the six hundredth year.

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

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.”  
(Amos 8:11).

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Though these words applied to ancient Israel they undoubtedly are a part of God’s message having a further and final fulfillment. The days of a famine of hearing God’s word is indeed upon us. There are so few who really want to know what God has declared. Instead, those who claim to speak for Him in fact undermine faith in God’s message. At a recent important national church council it was declared that the “larger liberty” for clergymens’ beliefs “must be upheld”. Philosophying on this declaration the council said, “Christians should not be afraid of controversy—in the past, crucial insights have been won by those who had the courage to question in faith”.

But what were the kind of questions being alluded to? On one hand it has been said that it is “very much doubted” if the Virgin Birth was a fact. Also the historical accuracy of the Resurrection story is questionable in contemplating “a conjuring trick with bones”. A church report on such scriptural subjects was so phrased as to avoid affirming the witness of the Bible saying that belief in the facts “can be held with full intellectual integrity”. Whether the tomb was empty could not be proved but “this is the understanding of the witness of Scripture which is generally received in the universal Church.” The report therefore did not exclude those who “agree with their colleagues over the theological meaning of the empty tomb and the Virginal Conception, but cannot accept them as proven historical facts.”

So faith in the inspired word is undermined. How then can they hear what they do not believe? Men turn to their own philosophy which implies that they know better than the God-preserved message, so fulfilling, by their failure to defend the integrity of God’s message, the ancient prophecy which declared that it would be so.

**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 and Hamburg.

Alternate Week: Revelation Study.

In accordance with the Almighty's instruction, the witness continues. Whether it will be heard we do not know, but seek His guidance that the efforts may be pleasing.

The work is on going to help those who are seeking to be united to the one Body.

The Sunday School outing is planned God willing, for August 16th.

*J.A.DeF.*

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*MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.*

Sunday: Breaking of Bread 11 a.m.

Thursday: Bible Class 7.30 p.m.

As the months go by and the work of His House is allowed to continue in this time of "small things", what is done is according to what He has permitted and provided for. This in itself is a cause for thankfulness.