

JANUARY 1987

A Monthly Magazine issued by

The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of
Papal and Protestant Christendom

A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

"Take heed that ye be not deceived"

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At the Table of the Lord

“O LORD, THOU KNOWEST ...”

IN our reading we are helped to perceive the scope of work given to Jeremiah who prophesied:

“... in the days of Josiah ... also in the days of Jehoiakim ... unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah ... unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive ...”

Jeremiah 1:2-3.

This work covered a long and difficult period in the history of Judah and Jerusalem. Under Josiah, a faithful king, Judah obeyed God and so prospered. After his death the people departed again, and the Almighty brought upon them the power of Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar, causing suffering, famine, warfare and ultimately captivity. It was in the midst of these dire circumstances that Jeremiah was God’s messenger to His people. It was a difficult task to witness against the falling away of His people, to warn of captivity, to foretell and experience the siege of Jerusalem when the inhabitants were starved into submission, even to the horror of consuming their own children. In these circumstances Jeremiah brought God’s message which was contrary to what the king, the princes, priests and judges wanted. Yet he faithfully testified, suffering shame, rebuke and physical violence. We have recently read several of these messages—some before and some after the first captivity—which took away King Jehoiakim, the chief and skilled people of Jerusalem, and the vessels of the Lord’s house. The people did not heed the words of God; indeed they accused Jeremiah of being a traitor. On one occasion he stood in the temple gate, witnessing to their disobedience, yet few heard. As a particular sign Jeremiah was to bury a linen girdle near the River Euphrates. Some time later, at God’s direction, he:

“... went to Euphrates, and digged, and took the girdle from the place where I had hid it: and behold, the girdle was marred, it was profitable for nothing ...

Thus saith the Lord, After this manner will I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem.

This evil people ... shall even be as this girdle, ... For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel ... and ...

Judah ... but they would not hear.” Jeremiah 13:7-11.

How grievously discouraging these events must have been to our brother. Yet they exhibited God’s righteousness. He witnessed faithfully and obediently, and all it brought was scathing reproach and danger, along with outright refusal to hear God’s warnings. What *Steady trust* he shows us as one directed by the Almighty.

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During the time of King Jehoiakim's captivity and into the reign of Zedekiah, as his prophecies were coming to pass, Jeremiah brought another divine message. It had to do with a dearth in the land (Jeremiah 14:1). There was a shortage of water, creating famine and disease, but also there was a dearth of God's help—a withholding of His blessing as He instructed Jeremiah:

“... Pray not for this people for their good. When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.”
Jeremiah 14:11-12.

How surely this came to pass. In the midst of all this suffering and loss, Jeremiah no doubt mourned because of Judah's downfall, yet experienced the anger of his people. His words help us to know his mind:

“Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! ... every one ... doth curse me.”
Jeremiah 15:10.

Jeremiah's life was one of struggle and opposition as he contended against his people's ways. It brought him cursing and vilification. How did he endure it? If we can discern this, we can be helped in our endeavor to be faithful witnesses, not in such severe circumstances perhaps, but nevertheless with determination to please our Father in the midst of an evil world. Jeremiah's words reveal his source of strength:

“O Lord, thou *knowest*: *remember me*, and *visit me*, and *revenge me of my persecutors*; take me not away in thy long-suffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.”
Jeremiah 15:15.

This man, our early brother, recognized that God was ever aware, and that He in mercy and love would remember and visit him. To realize that our Father knows our every thought, our every need, and is ready to help whatever the circumstances is a great assurance, Brethren and Sisters, as we struggle to submit to His hand. Jesus taught this as we have recently read:

“Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of ... them is forgotten before God? ... Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.”

Luke 12:6-7.

Was this not Jeremiah's strength — that God knows, no matter what! Indeed our smallest circumstances are under His control and in His wisdom have been placed upon us for our testing, for good, and for bringing us closer to Him. Jeremiah appealed to God about just such a situation:

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“Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously? ... thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins.” Jeremiah 12:1-2.

As our brother suffered at the hands of the ungodly who seemed to prosper, he would wonder, Why should this be if God is mindful? He answered his own question:

“But thou, O Lord, *knowest* me: thou hast seen me, and *tried* mine heart toward thee: pull them out like sheep for the slaughter ...” Verse 3.

His strength was in this solid conviction that the Almighty knows. As we, Brethren and Sisters, at times may feel overwhelmed by our circumstances, can we bring to a clearer realization that He *is* mindful, and in His own time and with our trusting efforts and appeals, He will help us to endure and will deliver?

David, another of God’s faithful children, also recognized this gracious provision:

“O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.”

Psalm 139:1-3.



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What was David's reaction to this knowledge?

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:23-24.

We often sing these words, Brethren and Sisters. Are they the expression of our hearts? Do we seek His searching of our ways so that we can be shown where there is need for change? To *search* entails a penetrating. Our hearts need this by the One who knows all, for our own perceptions are dull indeed, and prejudiced by our flesh:

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."

Jeremiah 17:9-10.

Let us accept that our hearts are away from God's thinking and ways. Let us urgently seek His searching so that we may know His ultimate judging for good. With these thoughts in mind, we can, with Jeremiah, rejoice in this conviction: "O Lord, thou knowest ..."

As Jeremiah was encouraged and comforted, he continued constant in prayer:

"... remember me ..." Jeremiah 15:15.

Here was a plea for God to be "mindful", to "think of" him. God in His loving watchfulness is always thinking on those whose hearts He searches and finds to be toward Him. David, realizing this, cried out:

"Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people: O visit me with thy salvation;"

Psalm 106:4.

The Father does not ever forget His children, although we may feel at times afraid and forsaken, and along with all His people may cry out:

"... The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me."

Isaiah 49:14.

Then we can only plead for His remembrance lest we fail to glorify Him, and yet let us be lifted up with His promise:

"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; ..."

Isaiah 49:15-16.

We can be indeed unshakeably in His hands. How hard it is to keep this mercy and loving kindness in mind as circumstances seem overwhelming. Here is where we need that belief and

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discipline to bring our minds back again to the prophet's urgent cry: "... Remember me ..." And further Jeremiah prayed: "... visit me ..." (Jer. 15:15). To *visit* is to oversee and number. How much we need this divine oversight. Our minds go to the example of Job who suffered much. Steadfast in the midst of this, his mind was:

"Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit." Job. 10:12.

Job's spirit was "hedged about"—"protected". He recognized that all was done with God's knowledge and intention. Therefore he was able to accept and profit by it. His mind is further expressed for us:

"... I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: ..." Job 19:25. Job's hope was that as he stood before the judgment seat, he would be found acceptable in the presence of Jesus. This sustained him, preserved his spirit through the visitation, as God tried that spirit. Can we then see why the faithful have ever cried out: "remember me" and "visit me"—realizing their constant lack and consequent need?

The Lord did visit Jeremiah as he endured the rebuke and cursing of those to whom he had been sent. The Almighty said:

"... Verily, it shall be well with thy remnant; verily, I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil and in the time of affliction." Jeremiah 15:11.

Jeremiah, along with a small remnant such as Daniel and Ezekiel, was treated well even though suffering. He was sustained, his life was preserved as he witnessed and lived in the hope of God's salvation. Why did the Almighty respond so graciously to his need? His words make it very clear:

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: ..." Jeremiah 15:16.

His word, with all the promise and strength it provided, was Jeremiah's food, bringing joy and rejoicing even in the midst of hardship. It can be ours also! The constant feeding will build a reservoir of strength to call upon, even as our daily food can fill our physical need to help us withstand great stress and trial. Let us then through our brother's help and example cry out as he did:

"O Lord, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me ..." Jeremiah 15:15.
J.A.DeF.

“Where is your faith”

WE read in Luke chapter 8:22-25 of the Lord Jesus and His disciples crossing the lake during a storm. As the Lord Jesus slept during the tempest, His disciples grew afraid and woke Him in fear of perishing. After He stilled the wind and waves he said to them, “*Where is your faith?*” As we ask ourselves this same question it requires us to examine our heart. We are given help when we look to the example of those of old who were helped because of their faith.

Previously we read in this same chapter of one called Legion, whom the Lord Jesus healed. After being returned to good health he sat at Jesus’ feet growing in the understanding of God’s word. He was healed because of faith. Some when they saw the miraculous transformation in this man were afraid of the Lord Jesus and asked Him to leave (Luke 8:35-37):

“Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

They also which saw it told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.

Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.”

These circumstances of wondrous healing were allowed by God to test the faith of Jesus’ followers, particularly the disciples who needed to establish their faith to do the work set aside for them.

In another example, Jairus a leader of the synagogue came and besought the Lord Jesus to come to his house and heal his daughter who was dying. His faith was strong enough that he believed the Lord Jesus could help, even in this hopeless situation. As the Lord Jesus and His followers started on the way, He stopped to perform a miracle—again a moment seized upon to demonstrate the importance of faith. In this situation a woman with an issue of blood for twelve years had spent all her living upon physicians searching for a cure, but to no avail. Her faith was so great, that she believed she had only to touch the hem of Jesus’ garment and she would be healed: (Luke 8:47-48)

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“And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.”

The crowd could plainly see the power that was evident when one had faith and belief in the Almighty. Meanwhile, can we imagine how anxious Jairus must have felt by the delay in reaching his daughter? And while Jesus spoke praising this woman for her faith, word came that Jairus' daughter was dead—“trouble not the Master”. Jesus' words immediately to him were:

“... Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole”.

(Luke 8:50).

These words were meant as a source of comfort to Jairus as well as instruction to those listening—fear not and believe.

How important it is to remember that faith and belief are all that is needed to be made whole. Yet what a test of faith this would be for this grief-stricken father. Even as Jairus realized his daughter was dead, he needed to still believe that with God nothing was impossible. Of course, not all had the faith of Jairus, for we read of the response of some in chapter 8:51-52:

“And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and mother of the maiden.

And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth.

And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.”

Those that laughed were sent out of the room and with only the mother, father and disciples present He took the girl by the hand and said:

“... Maid, arise. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway.”

(Luke 8:54-55).

Can we imagine the joy and awe that Jairus and his wife would feel as they saw life given again to their daughter? How different was this power of faith displayed here by Jairus, from what our own is at times. Often the power of fear grips us and paralyzes our faith, making us doubt.

In Luke chapter 17:11-19 we read of the ten lepers that were healed by Jesus, yet only one returned to give thanks. Were not all ten healed? Yet the one who returned was “made whole”. There was more healed than just his physical body --- his was a true spiritual healing giving him a deeper understanding of the power of God.

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In another instance of healing in Luke 18:38-43 we read of the blind man who cried without ceasing as he learned of Jesus' passing, pleading for his sight to be restored. Through his tenacity and faith he was heard by the Lord Jesus who said:

"... Receive thy sight: *thy faith hath saved thee*. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God."

Again, not only was there a receiving of sight but that man received greater insight of what was necessary to serve God and receive eternal life, for the Scriptures tell us "he followed him, glorifying God".

Another demonstration of faith given to the disciples is seen in Mark 9:17-19:

"And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him: and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not."

and verses 25-29

"When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.

But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."

Here was a situation where the disciples were powerless to heal this child and asked why. The faith required here needed to be pure and strong, with the mind and heart focused only on the purpose of God.

In Acts 14:8-10 we have another example of faith:

"And there sat a certain man at Lystra impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked:

The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and *perceiving that he had faith to be healed*, Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked."

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Here was a faith that Paul could see. How much that speaks of what faith must be like—not surface but vested deeply in God’s purpose and understanding so that it radiates in our living. We are reminded in Hebrews 11:6 by Paul:

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

True spiritual healing can come only as we recognize the Lord Jesus as our Savior and Mediator. As we think back on these examples that illustrated the power of faith to heal, it should help and strengthen us, anchoring our trust in God and His Son. If the Lord Jesus could ask us, “Where is your faith?” our answer should be “Only in Him”.

M.C.S.



From "The Christadelphian" 1895

FELLOWSHIP DIFFICULTIES on the RESPONSIBILITY QUESTION

THIS is creating fellowship difficulties. The London brethren have divided, as all are aware, and visitors from London find themselves in a doubtful position when they go into the provinces. Even brethren in the provinces are asking, 'What are we to do?' It is a painful issue, because of the doubt that many feel whether the form and degree of punishment to be awarded to knowing rebels against the light should be a question on which difference of view should interfere with fellowship. The solution appears to form itself under two heads—1. Order; 2. Doctrine.

On the first head, it is clear that where an ecclesia has split up into two mutually exclusive sections, ecclesias elsewhere cannot be in fellowship with both. The question of which section to fellowship would therefore be determined by the question of which section ecclesias elsewhere agreed with, because in all doubtful cases, the truth turns the balance.

It may not be more satisfactory to see clearly under the second head—doctrine. The question as agitated has become more than a question of whether enlightened rebels will rise to punishment. It has become a question of God's claim on the human race, and the principle on which He enforces that claim. The deniers of the resurrection of the disobedient say that they cannot rise because they are "condemned in Adam." This is as much as to say that they have no sin of their own to answer for. As a matter of fact, this ground is boldly taken by some, that men are not to be considered sinners, except as in Adam; that is, they are "held guilty" of Adam's sin, but not of their own. We have known of cases where the very obedience of the gospel in baptism has been denied to have any bearing on pre-baptismal sins.

All this has a much wider bearing than the mere question of whether rejectors will rise. It is not necessary to re-argue the question, and to shew the grounds on which it has been maintained from the beginning of the work of the truth that God has a claim on the submission of mankind, apart from their condemnation in Adam, and that their responsibility to this claim is a question of their knowledge of its existence, and of God's demand for its discharge. It is sufficient to point out that a new doctrine

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is brought to us and an old one denied on the ground of a misconstruction of apostolic language. The "law of the spirit of life" is wrested from its meaning of immortal life, and made to apply to natural life, as if, when Christ said, "If thou wilt enter *life*," He did not mean inter into *immortality*. The result of this misconstruction is to deprive the Gospel of its character as a testimony against the sins of men as well as an invitation to eternal life, and therefore to weaken its power in our hands. Not only so, but it comes in an aggressive attitude. It is no longer a dim and doubtful opinion as to the extent of the punishment of a certain class of offenders, but the dogmatic affirmation of the doubtful opinion as a principle of divine truth, and the challenge and condemnation of divine truth as a lie, and that too under the presumptions claim to be a "keeper of the sanctuary." This is a different situation, and has naturally forced the question of fellowship upon the attention of the brethren in London; where this departure from the truth has taken a formative and organic shape; and through them, has raised it everywhere. Time will re-form the shattered elements. Consistency ought certainly to keep all who think the sanctuary is being defiled from claiming fellowship with those whom they regard as guilty of this sacrilege. This consistency on their part will relieve the brethren who deny the charge from the embarrassment of having to say to them—"The basis of fellowship is unity of mind as to the ways of God. You have departed from the unity that existed. Therefore, the responsibility of the breach that has resulted is not ours."—*Editor.*



What Is Truth (John 18:38) Part 16

THE PROMISES TO ABRAHAM

THESE promises reveal God's purpose with this earth, for what He has promised He will surely fulfil. First of all, Abram was told "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred ... unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

In leaving his city life to wander ultimately in the land of Canaan Abram became a nomad, and this wandering life in the general confines of what became the land of Israel undoubtedly kept Abram apart from the superstitions of those times. In his days he did experience God's blessing in the increase of his flocks and herds. But when he died, who would have thought that a comparatively weak community of a wandering family would become an enduring nation. To that nation Abram's name became great, as also to the servants of Christ at an even later time, who significantly were told "And if ye be Christ's, than are ye Abraham's see, and heirs according to the promise." (Galations 3:29).

Abram was to be a blessing, moreover those who believed this were to be blessed, but those who scorned would be cursed by the Almighty, whose immutable work through Abram and therefore through the seed of Abram, would be universal blessing.

We must face the fact, as yet this has not been fulfilled, but Abram believed in it, hence his unique manner of life, trusting that if he responded to God, then what God had said would surely come to him. So it is testified of him, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." (Hebrews 11:13-14).

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The country that Abram and his immediate family sought was not the land of Canaan as it then existed, for Abram did not establish a city for himself. So, as the New Testament declares, they had faith in a future which would see Abram and his seed the centre of universal blessing, which to this present time has indeed never yet been fulfilled in God's good earth. But God did promise to bring about such welfare of peace and provision when He communicated His divine message to Abram. Therefore to those who believe, this blessing will yet come. But those who reject these sure promises of God through unbelief, their position has been established of old by the Omnipotent God; they will be accursed.



A Bible Class

“A SLOTHFUL MAN HIDETH HIS HAND IN HIS BOSOM”

THIS verse under consideration is taken from the writings of Solomon in Proverbs 19:24:

“A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.”

In examining this word slothful, it is found to mean, to be indolent and comes from a prime root meaning to lean idly, to be slack. The idea given then is one who is idle and not willing to extend himself to work. So here is the example of one who is so slothful or idle that he would rather starve than extend himself to lift his hand from bowl to mouth.

Solomon gives other examples of the slothful in Proverbs 26:13-15:

“The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way; a lion is in the streets. As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed.

The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom; it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.”

Also in Proverbs 24:30-34:

“I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;

And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.

Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction.

Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man.”

Here the field of the slothful is likened to one who has a knowledge of the Truth but does not apply the understanding of God. There is no care to keep it in good order, no labor to maintain it and so because it is untended and unprotected by its wall, grows wild and unfruitful.

Solomon also spoke in a like manner about the sluggard, and we can see similarities as we read in Proverbs 13:4:

“The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.”

The sluggard may desire to have the Truth — the word of God, but because he puts no effort into doing what is right and applying it in his living, he winds up empty. However, those who are diligent, who have put forth honest labor and energy in overcoming their fleshly thinking, “shall be made fat”, or receive

blessing from God. This is a grave warning that although there may be a desire to walk in God's Truth, desire is not enough—it takes effort.

That of which the Lord Jesus spoke in Matthew 25:14-30 known as the Parable of the Talents applies likewise to this consideration. The master had given five talents to one servant, two to another and one to the last. Their instructions had been to use them wisely and be ready to give an accounting when he returned. Through diligent trading the one who had five earned another five. The servant who had two talents likewise doubled his. However, the servant given one talent put no effort forth to increase what was given him, but hid it in the ground. When the master returned, those two servants who had increased their talents were praised, called "good and faithful servants" and granted blessings by their lord. The unprofitable servant was called "wicked and slothful" and the one talent given him was taken away and he was "cast into outer darkness". Those two faithful servants used what was given them to advantage and made an increase. The one called a sluggard hid what was given, did not use it to benefit him or others and so his end result was a loss of what he had been originally given. How important it is to use what God has given — the knowledge of His Truth, and use it to benefit. That knowledge must work in us to put down our flesh and increase the spiritual qualities that we know will please Him and serve His House.

Paul also speaks in Hebrews 6:10-12 of the need to be diligent:

"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

Once the word is received, there is the need to be diligent in making it a part of one's living, not losing sight of the end of God's purpose. Just as Abraham who after much patient enduring received the promises, and Job who endured and would not "curse God and die" but persevered during trials and afflictions to learn the perception needed in his life, so too such diligence must be displayed.

Even though trials today seem small in comparison with those endured by some of the faithful of old, yet the same need is there to diligently persevere, to labor in applying the Word of God so that it can increase and bring forth the spiritual fruits pleasing to our Father.

Correspondence

To the Editor
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Dear Sir,

I READ with considerable interest the copies of your magazine regularly sent to me, for which I thank you.

I wish, however, to comment upon a short article on page 137 of your July issue. It concerns the scriptural statements concerning Enoch, and asserts that he died the common death of mankind. For its support, however, the article uses quotations carelessly.

Scripture plainly states that Enoch "was not, for God took him" (Gen. 5:24). Paul further states this unique situation to be the result of outstanding faith, claiming that he was "translated that he should not see death (for) God translated him" (Heb. 11:5). To suggest, as the author of your article appears to do, that all that happened was that Enoch was conveyed away from his sufferings, does not seem to relate to any great principle of faith, nor explains the uniqueness of Jude's comment on this same matter. The word "translated" means, to change—and is put by Paul as a direct contrast to the "being dead" of v.4—and this change was evidence to that generation of the special case of one who trusted in Yahweh. In the list of constant death, Enoch's remarkable salvation evidenced the possibility of life. It is indisputable that "he did not see death" (the Gr word does not mean the mere act of 'seeing', but involves the actual perception of, and involvement in, death).

Your writer suggests that Enoch was merely removed to another place to die—but this hardly confirms to the special nature of the testimony. Many men "did not see their death" from such causes as blindness, sleep, etc.—but this gives no outstanding example of the reward of faith as Hebrews 11 requires.

The writer further uses Heb. 11:13 to claim that Enoch died. He is quite wrong in this application. The verse relates exclusively to the "seed" of v.12, who sprang from Abraham, and to whom were committed the promises of Abraham—for those who thus died all "saw the promises afar off... confessed they were strangers and pilgrims". This was the state of the faithful AFTER Abraham had left home and family to venture into the Promised Land. It does not describe, nor refer to, those before Abraham,

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for they could not be described by the verses 13-16. The circumstances had changed with the call of Abraham, and "these all" (his progeny) certainly died in faith. But to include Enoch in this verse is to ignore the structure of Hebrews 11, and the reasoning of the Apostle.

In the use of the general quotations of Rom. 5:12, we must acknowledge that Paul does not say that all die — but that the *condemnation* of death passed upon all men. For he further claims in another place: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed (translated)." Such, at the return of Christ, will be granted immortality without feeling the effects of the grave, whether they lived for 20, or 80, or 900 years. Their age does not alter the fact that they will be changed into immortality without undergoing the corruption of the grave.

I acknowledge that this is an amazing situation with Enoch, but with God nothing in conformity with His eternal purpose is impossible—hence we must learn the reason and teaching behind the unique case of Enoch. Other unusual and difficult explanations are: the Virgin Birth, the transfer of Philip through distance instantaneously; how water became wine. These are miracles — and so is the situation of Enoch. But it teaches valuable lessons of the possibility of life in the midst of the record of death in Gen. 5—and for this reason Enoch's divine intervention provided hope for the hopeful.

It seems to me more difficult to explain that "he did not see death" means he died away from the arena of death: as a unique case of faith!! Many travellers have died in such circumstances, but provide us with no proof of the reward of faith. Enoch's unique situation certainly does, as Dr. Thomas, in "Elpis Israel" explains. Enoch is described by Jude as the "7th from Adam"—rather a strange description in a letter of conciseness and pointedness—unless it be that Enoch typified those of the "7th millenium" by the remarkable events that overtook him. Note, also, that of all the names mentioned in Genesis 5, Enoch is the only one (excluding Noah, whose record continues into ch. 6) of whom it is not recorded: "and he died" — surely a significant omission in view of Paul's and Jude's comments later. Moses statement that "he was not, for God took him" would suggest a greater import than merely that he was taken somewhere else to die without any reason for so doing.

I would be very interested to hear your comments.

REPLY

WE WISH to acknowledge what we accept as the kindly work by our correspondent to point out where it is thought that we need

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to adjust our understanding. Considerable effort has been made by him to this end. May we however place before our correspondent and our readers the following points on this matter.

Because of sin, Adam was told "thou shalt surely die". "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: . . . death REIGNED from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression . . ." (Romans chapter 5).

If Enoch is not dead where is he? The scripture says "... all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years." (Genesis 5:23). After that length of time he had no further days amongst men, but neither is he in heaven for "... no man hath ascended up to heaven ..." (John 3:13).

Do we not need to realise the compassion which God exercises towards the work of His hands? Would He keep Enoch in a position of complete isolation from his Brethren and Sisters? those whom ultimately he is to spend eternity with, according to God's beneficent purpose?

This matter of Enoch brings a necessary consideration of the sacrifice and death of Christ. Jesus after thirty three years of probation "... that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;" (delivered) "... them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Hebrews 2:14-15) Until Jesus died sin worked within Him, from which struggle He was taken, when He declared "It is finished" (John 19:30) Having previously "... offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." (Hebrews 5:7) Obviously Jesus died in sacrifice that Enoch, also, might ultimately live. Could we then think that God placed Enoch in a position of contending against the thoughts of the flesh for so long a time, if it were the case that Enoch still lives?

The fact stated is that Enoch "was not" (Genesis 5:24) ("Not" Hebrew "Lo" a simple or abstract negation) "for God took him". ("Took" Hebrew "Laqach": to take, or take or carry away, or received). As Hebrews chapter 11 shows, this reveals that God approved Enoch's faith. It matters not that there is a great lapse of time since Enoch was "no more", he does not know of it; and it will be to him, as the sleep of last night when he comes forth again in "the morning" of Christ. The end of Enoch's probation came early, neither with ill health or of being bodily worn out. A specific intervention of God, which the scripture shows is to be regarded as a blessing to a man of pleasing faith.

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

“... there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.” (Matthew 24:7).

We are continually being told of earthquakes in various parts of the globe; and the famine undoubtedly is still rampant in East Africa.

But Western countries which have escaped such things are unscathed. For them it is the pestilence.

At the time of writing the British Government has set into operation a great advertising campaign to warn the nation of the scourge of “Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome” generally referred to as “Aids”.

It is officially estimated that forty thousand people in Britain have become infected with the Aids virus, though some experts think the British Government, to avoid alarm, have set the figures too low, and the true figure is already a quarter of a million people. The United States however is in a far worse position, as also parts of Africa where millions are expected to die in the next decade unless effective treatment can be discovered.

Up to now, even though much research has been done, there is no cure; indeed there is little that can be done even to alleviate the dread consequences of the virus.

The Director-General of the World Health Organisation has warned that in five years time there could be one hundred million people infected with the “Aids” virus. Even now there are between five and ten million people affected, and scientists are talking of a holocaust to come.

It is a situation which Christ predicted over nineteen hundred years ago, but He did add the encouraging words to those who believe in Him:

“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” (Matthew 24:13).

News from the Ecclesias

EDEN, NEW YORK, *Garng 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.

We rejoice with our brethren and sisters in Manchester over the restoration of one who has shown a true spirit of repentance. God works slowly but surely on behalf of those who steadfastly seek Him in sincerity and truth.

As the work of witnessing continues, guidance and help is sought from our Father that it may be blessed as He sees fit. It is with desire to honor His name that we enter into this work and with a prayer that some may consider and heed the warning in these last times.

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 work continues in the United States in an endeavour to remind various sections in Christadelphia of the sad history of The Truth, we in the United Kingdom rejoice that we are allowed to fellowship such a witness.

The disunity which has persisted and increased since the time of the "Pioneers" surely presents a grave warning of how easy declension can ruin and break up the people of The Lord Jesus, revealing the truth of Jesus' warning "take heed ye be not deceived."

With profound gratitude we report the return of one to the "Shepherd and Bishop of (our) souls."