

SEPTEMBER 1989

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"

"AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD"

"GOD'S WITNESS"

"FELLOWSHIP AND THE DOWIEITE CONTROVERSY" (continued)

"AT A FRATERNAL GATHERING – PART 3"

"A BIBLE CLASS"

"EXTRACTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE WITH A BIBLE FELLOWSHIP"

"THE SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD"

"NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS"

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AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD
"WHAT SHALL I RENDER UNTO THE LORD?"

For our spiritual help, we have been listening to David's words found in the Psalms. These Psalms, pruned songs, are part of our daily readings for eighty days out of the year, and in this we are especially helped to perceive David's spirit.

What can this God-directed contemplation do for us, Brethren and Sisters? Will it not sustain, give strength, increase our trust and gratitude for God's mercy and love? Does it give us a greater perception of how we can respond to that blessing, as we realize that we are shown here also the spirit of his greater Son? For example in the Psalm read this morning David began:

"I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live."

Psalm 116:1-2.

How often indeed God did hear his voice raised in supplication for deliverance as well as in thanksgiving and praise. Also he spoke at times in despair and again in contrition. He called upon the LORD, not only as revealed in these Psalms, but also in the books of Samuel, Kings and the Chronicles. Because God answered, ever hearing, David said: "I love the LORD..." How simple are these words, but how expressive of his perception and response. Can we not profit by these sincere and child-like words: "because He hath heard" me, I love Him? Let us ask: Does He indeed hear our voices—has he hearkened to our supplications? We must acknowledge that He has, for each of us individually, as well as for our brethren and sisters here and across the sea. He has granted guidance, strength, healing and increased hope. What is our reaction to such mercy, lovingly granted? Do we respond in like manner, loving our Father, our Creator, the benefactor and bestower of all blessings? We can quickly answer, "Certainly, I do love God"—but should we ponder this more carefully? How do we show that love? Are there ways in which we can more fully please Him? Is there heart-felt gratitude?

David asks:

"What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?"

Psalm 116:12.

Have we stopped, Brethren and Sisters, to count His benefits? What are benefits? The word is used as to do good, deal bountifully or bestow. In our Psalm we find the same word used as David exclaimed:

"Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath dealt bountifully with thee." Verse 7.

As our brother counted up all these good things granted, he found a measure of repose and tranquility, where at times he had been cast down and disquieted. As we all come to know turmoil and fear, peace may be restored to our minds as David found:

"Return unto thy rest, O my soul;..." Verse 7.

With him, we may be greatly reassured by those benefits that our gracious Father bestows, and so be gratefully stirred up to ask, as David did:

"What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits...?" Verse 12.

In his searching, David first of all resolved:

"I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD." Verse 13.

What is this "cup of salvation"? The word cup conveys the thought of a portion given, or one's lot. This blessed cup is held out to those who seek and respond to the Almighty's purpose and promise. Our minds here go to Jesus' words in the garden when He was betrayed by Judas, and about to be taken prisoner. When Peter drew the sword in His defense, Jesus said:

"...Put up the sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" John 18:11.

He did indeed drink that cup to the full, accepting the portion which His Father had allotted. He agonized to drink it. He cried out, yet with submission:

"...Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." Luke 22:42.

Through His perfectly doing that will, He became the means of salvation for all who, as He did, seek to take the cup that God in mercy holds out. Jesus reminded His disciples of this need:

"...Are you able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?...Ye shall drink indeed of my cup..." Matthew 20:22-23.

They did drink of His cup, suffering greatly in their lives and for many, suffering death for their work: but in all, rejoicing in the hope of His salvation. For us, weak flesh as we are, there must be a fellowshiping of Jesus' spirit of obedience, a determination to drink of His cup. We have been so reminded this morning in being permitted to drink in symbol of this total sacrifice as Jesus has commanded: "Drink ye all of it..." (Matthew 26:27). To do so hurts, it costs, requiring a cutting off of our own wants and ambitions, and a submitting in love to the desires of the Father. With David then, we must be determined to "take the cup of salvation which He extends, and drink of it willingly as Jesus did. It is a token of our resolve to "render unto the LORD for all his benefits". We must be mindful that Jesus, in His tremendous and perfect work, needed help. He prayed earnestly, repeatedly, and His Father heard. Do not David's words encourage us to seek that same help? As he was determined to drink that cup he said: "I will...call upon the name of the LORD."

Must we too then, Brethren and Sisters, in reaching out for that cup of salvation, be importunate in calling upon the One who can so marvellously help, even as he helped His own Son?"

In his desire to give of himself unto God for His many benefits, David further resolved:

"I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of
all his people." Psalm 116:14.

What were the vows he was resolved to keep? Perhaps the same as Israel vowed at Mt. Sinai when Moses read the book of the covenant, and they responded so clearly:

"...All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient."
Exodus 24:7.

We are told that Moses then took the blood of the sacrifice and spinkled it upon the people, saying:

"...Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath
made with you concerning all these words."
Verse 8.

The Psalmist in response to all of God's benefits resolved similarly, desiring to keep his part of that covenant which the LORD made with him. What does the keeping of these vows mean to us?

Perhaps David's further words help as we seek to keep our promise to God each day:

"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints."
Psalm 116:15.

To the Almighty, the mortifying of the desires of the flesh by those seeking to fulfill their vows is much set by. How is that death of those seeking to be His saints to be accomplished? Is it not first by being buried unto Christ's death in the waters of baptism and rising a new man, nourished and growing? It is each day striving anew to keep that vow made as we entered that water. We fail and we falter, but through that cup of salvation in Christ, forgiveness is possible. It is the supreme benefit bestowed upon each one who is truly striving to become involved with Christ in the death of God's saints.

David further continues to show us how to "render" for all God's benefits:

"I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the LORD."
Psalm 116:17.

What is the "sacrifice of thanksgiving"? Perhaps the Spirit's instruction helps us:

"Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips."
Hosea 14:2

"Turn to the LORD" or "Render unto the LORD" — the same desire expressed by David. One way we can render to Him is with our words of thanksgiving, which are as the calves, freewill offerings, of our lips — acceptable sacrifices unto our Father. When we think of such sacrifices, our minds go to the law concerning the peace offering which would also involve thanksgiving:

"If he offer it (the peace offering) for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes...."
Leviticus 7:12.

The peace offering, if from the heart, brought about peace between God and His children, looking forward to the work of Christ—reason indeed for true thankfulness! How appropriate that this sacrifice of thanksgiving, such as David sought to offer,

was a part of the peace offering. Indeed, we must willingly desire to offer the “calves of our lips” in gratitude and praise. It reminds us of Paul’s words concerning Jesus:

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

Hebrews 13:15.

Here is the mind of all who seek to “render unto the LORD for all His benefits”. It is the mind of one who looks forward with hope to the greatest benefit our Father can bestow, the coming out of great tribulation with robes made white in the blood of the Lamb, as we are shown in the Revelation to John. These so blessed are seen before the throne of God, still rendering unto Him for all His benefits:

“...Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanks-giving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.”

Revelation 7:12.

What help toward this glorious hope we find in the words of David, as with him we desire to first perceive and then to render wholeheartedly unto God for all His benefits:

“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s.

Psalm 103:2-5.

Through this spirit, we can be helped to more truly value all His benefits, and unite in the rendering to Him all that please—expressing our thanksgiving for His merciful kindness.

J.A. DeF.

GOD'S WITNESS

Each year in the course of our reading plan, we are privileged to study the last hours of the Lord Jesus, and each Sunday as we approach the Lord's table made possible by His sacrifice, we are reminded of the great struggle there must have been to complete a life without sin. In the same situation we would have failed miserably, and so marvel at His perfect obedience and submission.

We are helped and strengthened in our own circumstances however, as we study His last hours and how He dealt with those without who had no concept of God's Truth. We know that the Scribes and Pharisees brought Jesus to Pilate to be judged, for they could find nothing under God's law of which to accuse Him, so brought Him to be crucified under Gentile law. Pilate's first question as recorded in Mark 15:2 was:

"...Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it."

A short response, for Jesus knew it made no difference if His answer was yes or no, His accusers had only one end in mind — His death. When we go to the same record of this event in John 18:33-37 we find the Lord Jesus' further response to Pilate:

"...Art thou the King of the Jews?

Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: What hast thou done?

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

We see in this response that Jesus conveyed to Pilate the true understanding of what had been vested in Him - a work first in Himself and then the promise of a kingdom to come and a work ultimately to be given to His servants who would be part of that kingdom. He confirmed the Word of God and here in the ears of

Pilate repeated the essence of the gospel message. The Lord Jesus knew that the Truth was not to be part of Pilate's life, nor that of the Scribes and Pharisees, (as it should have been). He had full recognition of the work set before him.

John 12 helps further in this regard of understanding Jesus' plight in verses 27-28:

"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father glorify thy name..."

The Lord Jesus' prayer in this record of John was in preparation for the circumstances that would befall Him and lead to His crucifixion. When He was brought before His accusers He said virtually nothing in His defense. He could not say...Father save me, for it was for this cause that He was brought into the world. By saying nothing to Pilate and the Scribes and Pharisees, He glorified God knowing He could not seek a means of escape from the suffering that was to come. John 12 tells us further in verses 23-24:

"Then Jesus answered them saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.
Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit".

How often after a difficult or painful circumstance we say how fortunate we had not known what was ahead. The Lord Jesus knew that ahead of Him was pain, suffering, shame, and ultimately death. Yet with this knowledge He remained steadfast, putting down his natural inclination to escape as He was able to do and instead submitting in obedience to His Father's plan for Him, thus glorifying God.

To those who desire to follow after Him, He has left words of encouragement to help during their times of trial and testing in Luke 21:14-19.

"Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.
And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.
And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

But there shall not an hair of your head perish.
In your patience possess ye your souls."

The Lord Jesus obviously applied this same advice in His response to Pilate. He did not meditate ahead of time, in fact He said very little, but spoke of the Kingdom of God and of His ultimate purpose with His children. He glorified the name of God by giving a true witness to His word, not fretting to save Himself, but submitting to the hand of God upon Him. We must have this same spirit of obedience within us so that all of our actions are overruled by God's will, knowing that as we trust in Him we will be helped and sustained in our witness to any who may hear.

Pilate did not really "hear" Jesus' testimony, nor did the Scribes and Pharisees, but God heard and those "receiving" the knowledge of His Truth have heard. As we have heard His voice today through the record of the Scriptures and have seen how the Lord Jesus applied the wisdom of God, we too are helped to submit to Him. In John 8:45-47 we are told in Jesus' own words why those without could not hear His testimony:

"And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.
Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth,
why do ye not believe me?
He that is of God heareth God's words:
ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God."

Many of our words to those without are not heard or perceived in any depth because they are not called of Him and so are, "not of God".

As we hear we must respond to Jesus' words to be able to move and witness in a way which glorifies our Father's name. As we witness then, how careful we must be to contemplate our circumstances and measure our words to assure they glorify only One, our Father in heaven.

M.C.S.

FELLOWSHIP AND THE DOWIEITE CONTROVERSY
(CONTINUED)

Correspondence from the Ecclesia to a Dowieite sympathiser, Edinburgh, June 2nd 1867.

“Dear Brother, — Regarding you as we do as a brother whom we love in the truth, we feel great sorrow at your continued absence from our midst. We are therefore constrained to write you, not with the purpose of long exhortation and argument, but in a few simple words of earnestness and truth. You are our brother, united to us by the strongest of ties. We are of the brotherhood of that commonwealth which has for its Lord and Master, Jesus, the Anointed One, who is our great High Priest and Advocate with the Father. We have made ourselves his servants now, and we cannot, if we would, break off that relationship, until after we have appeared at his judgment-seat, to receive the reward due to the faithful or unfaithful servants. And it is, dear brother, in this present time, that we must bring forth fruit to him, in order that in the ages to come, we may no longer be servants, looking for the promised reward, but that we may reign with him as kings. From what we know of you, we are persuaded that you will heartily assent that is an imperative duty on all who are in this position, to manifest their service and love to the Master, and to his words, by loving his brethren with “an unfeigned love”; not forsaking the assembling of themselves together, to exhort and to build up one another in the most holy faith, and, above all, to break bread in remembrance of him, and in the earnest expectation of his coming again, to change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his own. We say we believe this is your faith as well as ours; and we are convinced that the reason you have not seen it to be your duty for a length of time so to manifest your love to our Father, who first loved you, in bringing you from darkness to his marvellous light — by loving us, who are your brethren, the children of the one family of faith — is not on account of a want of appreciation of the truth, and the duty which it involves, but of other things, which are stumbling-blocks in the way of unity between us. These things, if they in reality exist, are of the slightest possible character; and although at present you may esteem them great, we earnestly entreat of you to meet us, so that these obstructions may be removed. We pray sincerely that this united appeal from us as a community, to your heart and understanding, may not be without good results. One or two, or more of the brethren, as representing us, will be most glad to call upon you; or if it be more suitable, that you call upon them, to talk over

matters, in order to our unity: in which case would you communicate to me your wish. In the meantime, dear brother, I shall subscribe myself, in prayerful affection, yours in the bonds of the Covenant, on behalf of the brethren, Robert Paterson, Sec."

Reply to the above letter, Edinburgh, June 21, 1867.

"Brother Paterson, —Regarding you as a brother only from what you say in your letter, as I have never seen you personally; but your sayings lead me to understand that you are a believer in the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ: I regard all such as brethren in the Lord, and have therefore been immersed into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. The wise, then, of the time of the end, are those who believe such, and they shall shine in the kingdom of the God of Heaven. I find, from the little conversation that I have with the brethren in South Bridge Hall —at least those I come in contact with sometimes — that they believe the same things. Now I cannot understand why you cannot all meet together as brethren, believing the same things, leaving what we may call opinions to be discussed in a brotherly feeling, and your whole desire to be, like Paul, that you be found worthy of a resurrection from amongst the dead. This is all I have got to say at present. You will be thinking me long in writing; but as I never like doing anything in a hurry, I hope you will excuse me.

Yours in the Lord,—
I have no other "stumbling-blocks" in the way at present."
(to be continued).



**AT A FRATERNAL GATHERING — PART 3
THE WORK OF GOD**

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32)

Dear Brethren and Sisters,
In Psalm 33:12 we read:

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."

Also verses 18-19:

"Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy:
To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine."

This is the assurance of our God, that even in times of shortage of food — whether spiritually or naturally — God's people will always be cared for against all harm. So in Luke 12 at verses 22-23, He said to his disciples:

"...Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment."

And also verses 29-32:

"And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of a doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

This is the promise—it can never fail.

It is laid on record that after Jesus cured a dumb man, he left Capernaum for a tour of the local cities and villages—teaching and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, even in their synagogues; healing every sickness and disease among the people. We know also that the Son of God was a constant preacher—whether in a private discourse—always speaking of the kingdom. It is impossible to comprehend his teachings without a full understanding of the kingdom. So we find in the universal belief that the kingdom of God is in heaven, and at death men go to heaven, isn't what the Lord Jesus preached, nor do they understand the good news concerning the kingdom of God.

When he speaks of His coming:

"...many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Matt. 8:11-12.

Further, when He speaks of events and signs of the times, He says:

"...when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors."

Mark 13:29

Thus indicating that the kingdom is of the future.

Again, at the last Passover celebrated by Himself and His disciples, when referring to the future things, His words were:

"...I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God...I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come."

Luke 22: 16, 18.

This good news of the Gospel is only intelligible in view of the Jewish idea of an actual kingdom to be established in the Holy Land in the age of the glorified presence of their Messiah. This was the idea before the mind of Christ is evident—from these three things:

1) The earth is recognized in His teachings as the scene of the kingdom, when it will be established.

2) The constitution of things involving men is always in view of this kingdom. If people are going to live for ever, they need a land to live in - elementary.

3) That the recompence of His servants—His true disciples—is always linked in His parables, and otherwise, with His second coming, to enter into possession of the kingdom.

Can we see why the instruction was so vital? First, to seek the kingdom of God, and the comforting words which follows:

“Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” Luke 12:32.

Let us take the first point: The earth is recognized as the scene of the kingdom when it is established—easily illustrated:

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.”

Matthew 5:5

We cannot mistake what this means. SHALL—in the future. Experience tells us there has been no fulfillment. This inheriting of the earth is with the invitation:

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

Matthew 25:34.

Also, the well-known petition in the Lord’s prayer:

“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”

Matthew 6:10

For our further consideration:

1) With the assurance of our subject -“ ...It is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” - it was said to John on Patmos:

“...The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Rev. 11:15.

2) The Jewish basis of the kingdom is established first in relation to the promises given to David:

“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of His father David:” Luke 1:32.

Jesus’ claim to be the King of the Jews, was the grounds which led to His crucifixion:

“Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.” John 19:21.

3) By the promise to His disciples that in the day of His glory, they would be enthroned with Him in kingly supremacy over the twelve tribes of Israel; recompence is linked to His second coming and entering the kingdom.

This is proved by what we read in Matthew 16:27:

"...The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

Continuing in Luke 12: 37-40:

"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

And if He shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

And further:

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares."

Luke 21:34.

He says, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Surely that must suffice of the evidence afforded of the real and true Jewish character of the kingdom of God. So we can more readily understand why the instruction to seek the kingdom of God is of utmost importance—that we might believe what God has promised concerning it. All this is exactly suited to the needs of this afflicted world—whether man to himself, man to man, or man to God. It is a part of the completeness and greatness of Christ — that while showing forth the noblest principles conceived by which our hearts are reachable — there is an approach to the age when the kingdom is established, and a government in which human life will be taken in hand by God.

"When thy judgments are in the earth" — then shall the world learn righteousness, and not before.

When life will be so regulated as to yield the beauty and joy of which it is capable; but which under present conditions is unattainable because of sin.

So we are instructed:

“And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?”
Luke 12:42

“...Meat in due season.” This is essential if we are to inherit the kingdom of God. Let us turn to Matthew 25, to help us understand what “meat in due season” really is.

Verse 34 — “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:” Why?

“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.
Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred...or thirsty...? When saw we thee a stranger...or naked...? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?
And the King shall answer...Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

Matthew 25:35-40.

This is a process — a gradual process of the Spirit’s instructing us in the way our minds should develop in our walk to the kingdom: kindly actions and thoughts for each other; each preferring one another; and submitting one to another in the fear of the Lord. This will become part of us, so much so that we will do these things unconsciously, not realizing that the “meat in due season” which we give, will help each other — yet done as to the Lord Jesus. This is something which must be cultivated, because it isn’t in us by nature; we are all selfish and covetous.

So then, brethren and sisters, what a high calling is ours, and what joy is in store for us, if we can but hear these words:

“...inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Matthew 25:34.

J.S.

A BIBLE CLASS

As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprove upon an obedient ear. Proverbs 25:12.

So often we see in the Proverbs, the contrast between the understanding of the Spirit versus the ways of the flesh, or God's wisdom versus the foolishness of man as in the above verse.

The verse under consideration seems to be linked with the preceding one in regard to the reception of the word of God as verse 11 says:

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

The Truth is something to be valued as are the precious metals of silver and gold, and the 12th verse continues this thought. An earring of gold or an ornament of fine gold would be of great value, beyond any ordinary adornment; therefore the Spirit which comes as a wise reprove to him should be valued by one in need of correction.

There are several references regarding the thought of gold. Proverbs 11:22 speaks of it in a different context but one is able to see how it applies to the verse under consideration:

"As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion."

How inappropriate it would be to find a jewel or costly ornament in a swine's snout and so too is a beautiful woman who is rash and lacks discernment. In Job 42:10-11 there is also help given as the value placed upon an ornament of gold as equated with the giving of a gift or reward:

"And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. There came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold."

Job had an obedient or hearing ear, and through his trial and testing he came to think differently and value the grace of God to an even greater extent and was blessed because of it.

The word "reprove" in the verse under consideration comes from a prime root meaning to make right or correct. In the eyes of the Spirit a reprove is one who comes to rebuke or chasten, to help one be right in the ways of God. In Hebrews 12:11 help is given to

see why God's chastening is so essential:

"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

Those who are "exercised" are those who have an obedient ear — a hearing ear, and receive the reproof in a right spirit. The important aspect seems to be as an earring of gold a wise reprover is something precious and to be valued for his desire to help save the spiritual life of a brother or sister, and what could be more cherished than eternal life? Proverbs 20:12 offers additional help:

"The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them."

It would seem that those with a hearing ear and a seeing eye are those who can hear and recognize the reproof of the Spirit and can yield to the hand of God upon them through the offices of a wise reprover.

"The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.

He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding."

Proverbs 15:31-32.

A reprover comes to help and build up, not to tear down in a critical manner. As one hears the advice of a reprover he is wise and grateful as a consequence, both are drawn closer together as there is a meeting of two minds, both yielding to the ways of God, striving with that common goal in mind — the hope of being accepted into the Kingdom of God.

"Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured."

Proverbs 13:18

Poverty and shame which shall come to the one who refuses instruction can not be compared with something of value as is the golden ornament. Those found approved at the judgment seat will be there not because of their own worth, but because they listened with an hearing ear to correction during their time of probation.

"The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned."

Isaiah 50:4.

The two aspects of hearing are brought out in these words of Isaiah. God's word does make one learned and with it comes an hearing ear that is obedience. How valuable to have the tongue of the learned, to be able to be a wise reprover and to also hear when

reproof is given by another. A wise reprover is one sent from God as His messenger bringing words of wisdom to help one in need. A wise reprover is as the shepherd spoken of by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18:12-14 who rejoices in the return of one who is lost:

“How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

The one who had gone astray was of such great importance to this shepherd that he left the ninety-nine which were secure to search out the one lost. A wise reprover too diligently seeks and works for the one he sees going off the path of life, and if there is an obedient ear what joy there is when he is safe again and back in the fold.

M.C.S.



Extracts from correspondence from an independent Bible Fellowship

“We live in a day when the book of Revelation has been opened up--- a prophecy --- not understood until this day ---. But as Zechariah 14:7 says at “evening time it shall be light.” We believe God sent a prophet in these last days. (Malachi 4:1-6) says “Behold I send you Elijah the prophet.” (Matthew 17:11-12) Jesus speaks of an Elijah that “shall come and restore all things (that was future) “our day”, and He speaks of an Elijah that had already come (verse 13). They understood it was John the Baptist, he came in the spirit and power of Elijah. He wasn’t Elijah the Tishbite of 2 Kings. But he had the “anointing” of Elijah, the spirit and power (Matthew 11:7-14) Jesus says this is the Elijah “who was to come” (That is Malachi 3:1) to forerun His first coming. Likewise there is to be one who will forerun His second coming. We believe William Branham is that man, who came in these last days and fulfils these scriptures ---. This is the last age Laodicea. “Lukewarm” and spewed out of the mouth of God. This age has seen God’s greatest “visitation” not only a messenger like “Luther” or “Wesley” but a prophet to

introduce Christ — make God manifest ---. Beware of false Christs, false prophets “there will be many” but Matthew 24:27 is the key we are to look for the light that was in the “east”. (John 1:4 the life was the light) we are to look for the “life of Christ” — the ministry of Jesus Christ, it will be in a man, not Jesus, but the “life of Jesus” “the Person of the Holy Spirit” working through a man fulfilling todays scriptures ---. That ministry came back on the earth in these last days ---. We have books and tape recordings of God’s prophet to this generation, which contain the message he brought, to call out a people in this last exodus from time into eternity ---. ---we are not joined to any denomination or organisations. The message is come out ---and there are people all over the world, who have come out from the anti-christ system. From Genesis to Revelation you will find God separates His own and its by revelation God reveals to them the Truth (Matthew 13:10-11) (Matthew 11:27) ---.”

Extract from the Remnant’s reply

“--- With reference to the book of Revelation --- that last book of the Bible has been given to be read and understood; given to Jesus” to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass ---.” Many of the things written therein have doubtless come to pass. But obviously there are other things yet to be fulfilled ---. May I tell you what I understand about the subject of Elijah. At the time of Christ the disciples raised the question why do they say Elijah must first come? (having Malachi 4:5 in mind) (Mark 9:11). The scribes perhaps had more than one reason for saying this, there was of course the prophecy, but the scribes who were resisting Jesus were saying He was not the Christ; and this would be implied by their saying Elijah must first come, and he has not come yet; so your Master cannot be the Messiah. Later when Jesus was on the cross they taunted with the words,

“He calleth for Elijah. Let us see whether Elijah will come ---.”

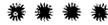
(Mark 15:35-36)

Jesus dealt with the question; “Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things” --- “But I say unto you, that Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed ---” referring to John Baptist. John Baptist was a typical fulfilment of Malachi; but Jesus did say that THE Elijah would ultimately come, and it is significant that Elijah was an important feature in the transfiguration along with Moses ---.

The Remnant's comment on the above correspondence

Only Jesus could say whether a man was Elijah (in typification). John Baptist himself said, "I am not" when asked "Art thou Elias?" (John 1:21) No man or men can say of a man, he is Elijah. Elijah will declare it of himself at the appointed time. This consideration brings to mind once again the warning of Jesus, "--there shall arise--false prophets--."

(Matthew 24:24).



**SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE
WORLD**

"Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them--."

(Ezekiel 38:5)

Concerning the great northern power the ancient prophecy declares, "--in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people --." (verse 8). But, specifically the scripture declares some southern nations will be allied to the great northern confederacy. Persia, (Iran) is one of the names mentioned.

How striking it is then, that after many years of aloofness the Soviet Union and Iran have come to agreement. With the passing of the Ayatollah the new leader in Iran has lost no time in making his approaches to Russia.

After his visit to Moscow, the Soviet leader said what had occurred was a "land mark", and improvement in the relations of the two countries had "never been so good". Iran is to supply more of its natural gas to Russia, which will pay by building factories for the Iranians. There is also talk of a direct rail link between Moscow and Tehran, the Iranian chief city.

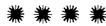
America views this trend with some concern, saying that any major Soviet arms sales to Iran would complicate USA —Soviet relations; not conducive to helping peace in the Persian Gulf. However a great financial aid plan to Iran has been arranged by Russia; which is aimed at oil exploration in the Caspian Sea, with natural gas being piped to Europe through Soviet pipelines. It is estimated this will be about three billion cubic metres by the beginning of 1990, bringing much needed foreign exchange to the nation. Additionally it is expected that the Isfahan steel mill will be helped to increase its production to four million tons.

The result of such co-operation has brought praise for Russia from the new Iranian leader. He has praised the Soviet head of State

as one of the world's great leaders, and has urged Soviet Muslims to have more contact with the Muslims of Iran, and more friendship between Iran and the Soviet Union generally.

A spokesman at the Islamic board in Baku has said that Soviet Muslims have welcomed this new era of ties between Moscow and Tehran "from the depths of our hearts" after a decade of little contact and political coolness. Seven million Soviet Azerbaijanis have a Shi'ite Muslim tradition like most Iranians.

So another aspect in the coming trouble of the controversy of Zion fits into place, revealing the accuracy of the ancient prophecy in its foretelling of present world events.



NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

HAMBURG, NEWYORK, Corner Southwestern Blvd. & Pleasant Ave.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m.
Sunday School 1.45 p.m.

Bible Class: Midweek: Forestville and Hamburg
Alternate Week: Revelation Study

Much gratitude is felt for the help and guidance granted here through the supplications of all in a special work in difficult and unusual circumstances.

We are grateful also to be joined in counsel with our Manchester brethren in their important ongoing work and continue with them in supplication of His overruling care.

J.A. DeF.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

Sunday: Breaking of Bread 11 a.m.
Thursday: Bible Class 7.15 p.m.

We plan to have the Autumn Fraternal Gathering on Saturday 2nd September.

It is a cause of encouragement as the Brethren and Sisters across the seas join with us in the continuing work of witness to the Truth.