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A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

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AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD
"HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE"

This morning we have been privileged to listen to David's words as he reflected upon his position, his life and his hope. It is not known when he wrote this Psalm, but it reveals his mind, also his spirit, as he sought to glorify God. The title is simple—"A Psalm of David"—recording in a few chosen words his gratitude for God's righteousness and for the revelation of His wishes for those who seek to honor Him. As we read these words, let us seek the help that the Spirit gives in our striving to grow more pleasing to our Father.

David exclaimed:

"Blessed be the LORD my strength...My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust;..."

Psalm 144:1—2.

These words reflect our brother's strong dependence upon Yahweh, in whom was his trust—or, as the word means, his hope and refuge. In times of tribulation David especially turned to his God, for by experience he knew that the Almighty would provide and sustain him. Thus he was moved to write, "Blessed be the LORD my strength..." This word for strength is not the usual one, but one used also as rock. Is not God like a rock, immovable, unchangingly providing a firm foundation, a rock that can be leaned upon and will shelter, standing firm? In a changing world where few things are certain, there is One always there, our God. Let us lean, rest our burdens on Him, looking to Him for sorely needed strength and confidence. David did this, though at times he failed, through trusting in his own strength, as when he numbered Israel. But he listened and learned. No doubt as he looked back on the experiences of many critical circumstances, he would marvel at God's wondrous help, crying out, "Blessed be the LORD my strength".

Further, he revealed for our help his sure conviction:

"...happy is that people, whose God is the LORD."

Psalm 144:15

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Our normal understanding of happy involves contentment, joy, pleasure. Often thoughts might be, "How happy I would be if I could only...." But often we find when that which seemed so desirable is attained, happiness does not endure—we want something more. This is what man is like, always looking, working for a lasting happiness and seldom finding it. David's word for happy means "blessed", a rather different connotation. The Psaltry renders this verse:

"O, the blessings of the nation to which Yahweh is its God."

True enduring happiness is found only in the blessings of God, the gifts of a loving Father to those who strive to please Him. David, writing these words, may well have had in mind God's promises of a Son and a Kingdom—"the sure mercies of David". Compared to those eternal blessings promised to him and to those who love the Almighty, how fleeting are man's yearnings!

Isaiah helps us to the perception of how true love for God may be evidenced:

"Thus saith the LORD, keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man, that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it..." Isaiah 56:1-2.

Because of clearly understanding and following God's judgment of right and wrong, true blessing is experienced. What is this blessing? Verse 5, speaking of eunuchs. (those who have no hope of children or family). tells us:

"Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off."

Further, relating to strangers (are we not strangers and pilgrims?), verse 7 continues:

“Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar;...”

Eunuchs and strangers are not happy in the normal sense of this word, but those who are eunuchs and strangers “for the kingdom of heaven’s sake”, as spoken by Jesus in Matthew 19:12 are blessed. Jesus concluded the thought: “he that is able to receive it, let him receive it.” The word receive is helpful, for its root is—an empty space or chasm—giving the thought of an emptiness in one and a yearning to be filled. This is what God’s word does—fills up the loss we may in our weakness experience, when in seeking to serve God, there is a denying of natural inclinations. As spiritual help fills that void, we begin to appreciate how blessed indeed are God’s people. The flesh may be most unhappy, but the spirit man is filled, replete with His love, and thus may respond as did David: “happy is that people, whose God is the LORD”.

Again Isaiah’s words strengthen this conviction:

“...therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you...that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.”
Isaiah 30:18.

To wait is to long for and to tarry, trusting that what He has promised will come. How few there are willing to wait, putting aside fleeting temporal happiness. This brings to mind and strengthens the joy in the words we sing:

“Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope in in the LORD his God:”
Psalm 146:5.

HOPE is the key to this blessedness. Hope requires expectation and waiting, keeping in view the promises of the Almighty. Throughout the Psalm, David’s use of “Selah”—implying, value this looking to the end—reveals his unquenchable hope and an ever enhanced perception of His blessings, moving him to question:

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“LORD, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him!
or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!

Psalm 144:3.

Man, as a whole, neither honors nor obeys God. Often man denies Him, even with blasphemy, as there is no fear of Him. A few seek to glorify the Almighty, having joined in covenant with Him. Yet even these at times fail miserably, as did David. Still the Almighty in infinite mercy looks down, granting forgiveness as it is sincerely sought, as well as strength and blessing. Why is He so merciful, so gracious, granting hope of life to a few? It is that He sees a humble and submitting mind, and a trusting in His divine love and integrity. We think of our brother David’s reaction to the promises given, expressing his wonder:

“...Who am I, O Lord GOD? and what is my house, that
thou hast brought me hitherto?” I Samuel 7:18.

Overwhelmed at this blessing, he felt to be unworthy in view of his flesh and failures. What was his resolve in response to this divine graciousness? He determined to do all possible to prepare for the house of God, which his son was to build, and to appoint for it singers, players upon instruments, porters, indeed all who would have a part in that glorifying of God. His heart being greatly touched, he exclaimed:

“Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none
like thee, neither is there any God beside thee...”

II Samuel 7:22.

Our brother retained this mind through all his life, as we have read today, and also as he expressed in Psalm 8:4—

“What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of
man, that thou visitest him?”

Visitest, in this sense, means overseeing, remembering. The Almighty did visit David, taking knowledge of him, esteeming him “a

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man after" His own heart. The promised "Son of David" He also visited, taking knowledge of Jesus' loving obedience, declaring: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Our Father visits and oversees all who struggle to belong to Him through that Son of David. We must not forget—He in love grants guidance, strength and mercy far beyond our worthiness or expectation. We sing the words of David:

"Bless the LORD, O my soul: ...forget not all his benefits;
Who forgiveth...healeth...redeemeth...crowneth...satisfieth...so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's."

Psalm 103:1-5.

Who alone can do these things—who can so bless? Is it not our Father who:

"...knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust."
Verse 14.

He created man from dust and, because of sin, decreed that men return there. Yet He is merciful and has promised life "to such as keep His covenant" (Verse 18).

How clearly we can see, Brethren and Sisters, why David was constrained to exclaim: "Happy (blessed) is that people, whose God is the LORD"—and why so many of his writings contain the words, "Blessed be the LORD" or "Bless the LORD". As we experience His love seen in strength and forgiveness, let us in our very hearts join in David's words of thanksgiving and praise:

"HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE..."

J. A. DeF.

TILLING IN FEAR

Help for us today comes from considering the books of Genesis, Psalms and Matthew, which reveal the essence of the gospel message. Genesis records the creation, an exhibition of the ultimate power and might of God to control all things in the earth as He wills. The Psalms look at the pruned words of David inspired by God which permit man to know how the spirit of that word can take hold of his living practically, and also to value his place in the Almighty's sight. Finally, in Matthew, is seen the accomplishment and personification of that word in the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, the Savior, foretold from the beginning who:

"...shall save his people from their sins."

Matthew 1:21.

Studying these three books helps us to focus on God's purpose with the earth and His people, showing the simplicity of the one hope. David in perceiving this and the relationship of man to God says in Psalm 2:11—12.

"Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.
Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way,
when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they
that put their trust in him."

Here is the mind of one privileged to know God's word and to recognize the Almighty's work through His Son, the Mediator. The responsibility of such a man is simply to serve him with fear, not a fleshly fear of harm, but a fear lest he fail to live up to the righteous example established by Jesus. We may ask, how are we to serve Him in fear? The word "serve" used here means to work or to till, and is used as to prepare the ground:

"...for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.
But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

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And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”
Genesis 2:5-7.

It is interesting to note that man was created from the ground and made a living being by God’s power, with the purpose that he obey His word. There was no man to till the ground until God provided a mist to water it and as the ground was made good, then was man created:

“And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”
Genesis 2:15-17.

Man had a work even before his fall from grace—he was to dress and keep the garden, and to till or serve God, working to control his own fleshly impulses. While this was done, all the goodness of God would continue toward him. Man’s failure however, changed this situation. Yet God was kind and provided a means to mend the breach created by sin, through the promises of the seed of the woman. In addition, the ground which before had so easily yielded her bounty would now be cursed:

“...cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread...”
Genesis 3:17-19.

Man’s work with the ground would now require hard labor, but the tilling of himself must still continue as he attempted to cultivate love, gentleness and humility which would please the Father, while endeavouring to control his innate carnal impulses. Our work today is the same—to struggle to make our living an acceptable

sacrifice to Him, to recognize the power and might of the Almighty, and the need to obey His word. All this through His Son, the One provided to take away His people's sin. How simple the message, yet how profound the results can be, but only for those who serve or till in fear.

How dramatically the example of this tilling is seen in the lives of Cain and Abel, two brothers taught by their parents from the same word of the responsibility of bringing an offering to their Creator. Abel's offering, the firstling of his flock revealed his tilling and working in fear of God. Cain's offering was not acceptable, why? It was not the best, the choicest or first fruits of his harvest thus there could be seen in his heart a lack of fear or care. Had Cain failed to recognize the Almighty's power to exact what was required of His servants? His countenance reflected his mind and heart, his lack of a right spirit, as it is recorded:

"But unto Cain and to his offering he had no respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell."

Genesis 4:5

In mercy and kindness God revealed to Cain his lack, and tried to help:

"And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."

Genesis 4:6-7

Here was an opportunity for Cain to admit failure, ask for forgiveness and make amends, but his sullen countenance showed that flesh had the upper hand. "Do well"—a simple and loving request to till, to work in fear, so forgiveness and help could be provided.

As God had predicted, sin was close at Cain's door for not long after this he slew his brother. What a simple yet eloquent example of one who did not respect chastening and turned from tilling for God. The Father cultivates and guides the lives of His, but

only as they respond in obedience to His word.

“He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain persons is void of understanding.”
Proverbs 12:11.

From our understanding of that word “till”, we are helped to see in this proverb that those who can serve God by controlling their natures will be satisfied with bread—the means of life, in a figure the gift of life eternal which Jesus will grant to those approved at His judgment seat.

“For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.
Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.
And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”
John 6:33-35.

The Creator has provided for his servants a means of spiritual sustenance and prospering, but only as there is a serving or tilling in fear—fear or failing to please Him. We must value more fully what God has provided—a means of blessing which can come as we delight in His law, and with David meditate upon it both day and night, in order to cultivate that trust and godly fear so pleasing to the Almighty.

M.C.S.

The Sabbath Day and the Lord's Day, continued
(Dr. Thomas 1859).

The reward to antediluvian and postdiluvian patriarchs and Israelites for a faithful observance or commemoration of Jehovah's rest from His creation-work was, "delight in the Lord, riding upon the high places of the earth, and feeding with the heritage of Jacob." This was neither more nor less than a promise of inheriting the kingdom of God, which is a summary of "the things hoped for and the things unseen," or the subject matter of the faith that pleases God. When that kingdom is established, all who are accounted worthy of it will "delight or joy in the Lord;" and occupy "the high places of the earth," ruling over the nations as His associate kings and priests; and share in the "new heavens and earth," in which dwells righteousness, when Jerusalem shall be made a rejoicing and her people Israel a joy. The knowledge and belief of these things was the powerful and transforming motive which caused Abel, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc. to "call the sabbath a delight, holy of the Lord, and honourable", and to observe it as the sons of Belial cannot possibly do. But while this was the motive, even faith, which actuated the sons of God in their keeping holy the seventh day, Jehovah did not permit the faithless to transgress or desecrate it with impunity. We know not what penalty, if any, was attached to its violation before the flood; but its desecration under the Mosaic constitution was attended with signal and summary vengeance, as will appear from the following testimonies:-

1. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou unto the children of Israel saying, verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore: for it is holy unto you. Every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done, but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord; whosoever doeth any work on the sabbath day shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath to observe the sabbath throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he resteth and was refreshed."

2. "Remember, O Israel, that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day."

3. "Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a sabbath of rest to the Lord; whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death. Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day."

4. "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the Lord said unto Moses, the man shall be surely put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the Lord commanded Moses."

5. "Thus saith the Lord, Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem: neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers. And it shall come to pass if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, to do no work therein: then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and upon horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain for ever. And they shall come from the cities of Judah, and from the places about Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from the plain, and from the mountains, and from the south, bringing burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and meat offerings, and incense, and bringing sacrifices of praise unto the temple of the Lord. But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched."

6. "Abide ye every man in his tent, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day."

From these testimonies it is clear that it was unlawful for servants in the families of Israel to light fires, cook dinners, harness horses, drive out families to the synagogues, or priests to the temple

to officiate in the service of the Lord. The visiting of families on the sabbath day, the taking of excursions for health or for preaching, and conversing about worldly, or family, or any kind of secular affairs, was also illegal, and punishable with death. The law, it will be observed also, had regard to the seventh, and to no other day of the week. It was lawful to do all these things on the first or eighth day (some particular ones however excepted), but not on the seventh. On this day, however, it was "lawful to do good;" but then this good was not arbitrary. Neither the priests nor the people were the judges of the good or evil, but the law only which defined it. "On the sabbath days the priests in the temple profaned the sabbath, and were blameless;" (Matthew 12:5) for the law enjoined them to offer "two lambs of the first year without spot as the burnt-offering of every sabbath." (Numbers 28:9-10). This was a profanation of the seventh-day law, which prohibited "any work" from being done; and had not God commanded it they would have been "guilty of death". It was upon this ground that Jesus was "guiltless"; for He did the work of God on that day in healing the sick as the Father had commanded him.

"The sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath: therefore," said Jesus, "the Son of Man is Lord also of the sabbath day." (Mark 2:27)

(to be continued).



A BIBLE CLASS

"...walked after things that do not profit."

Jeremiah 2:8

Prior to the study of our verse under consideration, we learn from chapter 1 verses 1-2 that Jeremiah began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of Josiah, King of Judah. If we look at II Chronicles chapter 34 we are given an overview of the circumstances at the time of his preaching.

"Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem one and thirty years.

And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD,

and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left.

For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images and the molten images." verses 1-3

Sometime in that thirteenth year, Jeremiah began his witness to Judah and Jerusalem and perhaps also to Josiah the king. Certainly, Josiah gained insight from listening to the word of God, for in righteousness he attempted to rid the land of idol worship by destroying the groves and altars. The prophet's work was to remind them of their past when:

"Israel was holiness unto the LORD.."

Jeremiah 2:3

They had been called to be a holy people, had made a covenant with the Most High and were privileged to be called His peculiar treasure:

"...I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."

Exodus 19:4-6

But by the time of Josiah, they had turned away from God, forgetting his mercies and care, slipping into the idolatrous practices of the nations around them, often instigated by their own kings such as Manasseh and Amon, grandfather and father of Josiah.

Jeremiah was instructed to speak unto Judah, we read of God's instructions to the prophet:

"Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.

For, behold, I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brasen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land.

And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD to deliver thee."

Jeremiah 1:17-19

He was to warn of God's wrath toward those who had turned their backs on the Living God to worship the works of their own hands.

"...I brought you into a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination. The priests said not, Where is the LORD? and they that handle the law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me and the prophets prophesied by Baal and walked after things that do not profit."

Jeremiah 2:7-8

Indeed, they had forgotten God's goodness and the deliverance of past times when their fathers had been saved from Egypt and cared for with water and manna in the wilderness. How abhorrent their wickedness was to the Almighty, doubly so because it was their leaders, the priests and prophets, those who should have taught God's way, who had transgressed and led them after things "that do not profit".

The prime root of this word "profit" means to ascend, and so they walked after things that do not ascend to a higher spiritual plane, after ways that did not lead their thinking to the requirements of God above. Perhaps verse 13 of our chapter helps further to expand this thought:

"For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

A fountain and a cistern are in direct contrast to one another. A fountain is a source or producer of water that can sustain life, whereas a cistern is merely a receptacle for storing water—while broken cisterns would hold none at all. Israel had turned from God, a life-giving source, to the broken cisterns of Baal and Ashtaroth, man-made idols wherein was no advantage or profit.

Sadly, it is a tendency of the flesh to seek after vain things that ultimately lead to waste. In a temporal or worldly sense something may seem desirable to us, but does it fit into the life God would have us lead? Solomon's words remind us:

“Treasures of wickedness profit nothing; but righteousness delivereth from death.”

Proverbs 10:2

As Jeremiah was sent by God to plead with Israel, we are instructed today to keep the things of God foremost in our living, the things which can lead to true profit—eternal life. We are reminded also by Paul's words to Timothy of the source wherein is all profitableness:

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

II Timothy 3:16-17

As we reflect upon the life giving sustenance of God's word, let us apply it by following after the One whose soon return can provide the means of the greatest profit of all.

M.C.S.



Concerning the Law in the Future (Dr. J. Thomas)

—In the Mosaic Age — the offerings were neither perfect, pure, nor pleasant to Jehovah. They were imperfect, not having been perfected by the expiation they typified; but keeping up a re-

membrance of unpardoned offences every year. This will not be the case with the perfect offerings of the Age to come. These will not be remembrancers of transgressions unforgiven; but memorials of pardon through the sacrifice of Messiah the Prince. There is no day of annual atonement in the future age. Israel's offences are blotted out once for all as a thick cloud when the New Covenant is made with them on their re-settlement in the Holy Land when that age begins; a forgiveness of national offences which lasts for ever, as it is written, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more."

But, the Mosaic offerings were not always unpleasant to Jehovah. It was the abominations of the offerers that made them disgusting in His sight. The High Priests and their sacerdotal households, who ought to have been "Holiness to Jehovah", were often men of reprobate character setting an example to Israel which they were not slow to follow, thus verifying the sayings, "Like priests, like people", and "The leaders of my people cause them to err."

This view of the matter accords with the handwriting of Jehovah by Malachi, "Judah", saith he, "hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of Jehovah which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. Jehovah will cut off the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar, out of the dwelling-places of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering to Jehovah of armies. And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hands. Ye have wearied Jehovah with your words; yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of Jehovah, and he delighteth in them." The saying, "in somuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand," implies that there was a time when He did regard the offering, and did receive it with good will, or pleasure, at their hand. Indeed the Spirit saith so in so many words when testifying of the purification of the sons of Levi; as it is written, "Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant to Jehovah (or regarded, and received with good will) as in days of old, and as in former years."

Then and Now
“Now”

The following is from a report of ecclesial work in the U.S.A.

“The Resada (LA, USA) Ecclesia regularly distributes leaflets (called locally “flyers”) to the surrounding areas. One such was a folded leaflet advertising a special lecture, a pre-recorded Bible Message, and a special invitation headed: ‘HELLO NEIGHBOR—We’ve noticed that you have recently changed your address and we would like to welcome you. We hope that you will be pleased with your change. We would also like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves and invite you to our activities. We are the Christadelphians—.’ The leaflet outlines all the weekly activities undertaken by the ecclesia, and is posted to all new residents in the district. This appears to be a unique and valuable method of advertising the Truth.”

The leaflet headed “Hello Neighbor!” goes on to invite the town’s newcomers in the following words:- “Won’t you join with us as we search the scriptures together and as we journey toward the Kingdom of God.” Following the details of the ecclesial address, a schedule of activities is given which includes the following:-

Sunday 9.30 a.m. Sunday School (All Ages—held weekly)
Sunday 11.00 a.m. Worship Service (Held weekly).

The schedule concludes with the information that “All of the above meetings are held in the Christadelphian Hall unless otherwise specified. Other classes and activities, including independent Bible Studies are held in various homes, etc. Please call for information.”

“Then” (as per R. Roberts—1882)

The ecclesial standard being referred to as in a personified description as follows:-

“He had become quiet and retiring; he had taken to stopping at home reading, varied only by walks out to attend meetings, or visit those who were unwell—.” “Paul Christman was not sociable as he used to be - - -. He had known, also, Joseph Arimathea - - -. He knew him as a pleasant young man, welcome everywhere in a large circle of admiring friends; but there had been a change. He had become serious—too serious by half. He did not go into company as he used to do - - -.” “We do not associate with the world - - - they would not thank us if we did. They could not find in us the society they wish - - -. They (the ecclesial members) are, in fact, in as complete isolation in the community, as it is possible for a man to be - - -.”

“He was a reg’lar jolly good fellow; everybody liked him. And doesn’t every body like him now?—Not so much as they used to. How’s that?—Well, I suppose he isn’t exactly as he used to be. How is he now?—He’s quiet like, and has taken to different ways. He doesn’t go out among the folks as he used to - - -. He’s not sociable as he used to be.”

The Remnant believes that the above examples speak for themselves of the change in standards from the earlier days.



Signs of His Coming and of the End of the World

“Behold, their valiant ones shall cry without: the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly.” (Isaiah 33:7)

The above words are in context with the divine promise that God will ultimately bring peace to this suffering earth. As the prophecy declares:-

“The Lord is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness.”

(verse 5)

There is at the present time a semblance of approaching peace,

so direly needed in this nuclear world. But the receding of the old communist influence has not brought stability. In fact the removal of one threat has released other forces previously kept in check that make for a new instability. Germany, in becoming reunited, is seen to be once more a super power. It has declared that it will not seek for its lost territories as a result of defeat in the Second World War. But obviously things could change in the future, a particular concern for Poland and Russia.

The international meeting in Houston in the summer revealed that some world leaders had fears about the political upheavals. The eastern powers for example, were considering the changes in the Soviet Union with mixed feelings, wondering what would result from increasing instability in Russia. But they have a closer problem, for they are also wondering what the future course of China will be. It seems that Japan may endeavour to use its economic strength to help China, hoping as a result that China in return will help towards stability in the far east.

Meanwhile the old militancies are superseded by the emerging of new trade-wars. At the present, in the main, the economic power of the world is divided between the E.E.C. and the U.S.A., and Japan, and there is a potential of economic conflict between these blocks.

Other areas of the world, in contrast, comprising two-thirds of the people, are seen to be in various stages of poverty; some in considerable debt to western nations. This, in itself, makes for unrest and instability.

No wonder then, that the ancient prophecy, speaking of the time of the end declares. "—the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly."

The only real solution will come from God, who has declared:-

"But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains- - - . And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths - - -."

(Micah 4:1-2)

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

HAMBURG, NEW YORK, 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

A recent call to jury duty received by one here has required a witness to the authorities of the Remnant's position as being a "separate" people and by scriptural command prohibited from judging the world's people.

J.A. DeF.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

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

We are very grateful for the strengthening of those who have been sick and for the improvement in those who suffer infirmity. Such helps encourage the Ecclesia and bring the mutual benefits of active participation in the Meetings of those who had been absent through illness.