

SEPTEMBER 1992

A Monthly Magazine issued by

The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of
Papal and Protestant Christendom

A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

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**AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD
"EVERY ONE WHOSE HEART STIRRED HIM UP"**

These last two weeks we have been in spirit with our brethren of Israel as they encamped about Mount Sinai. There Moses was in the mount and Israel awaited his return. We know how after a time Israel grew impatient and demanded of Aaron:

"... Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him."

Exodus 32:1.

Aaron yielded and made them a molten calf to which the people eagerly responded:

"... These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."

Exodus 32:4.

They knew better; they had experienced first-hand the Almighty's deliverance. Yet how swiftly and easily the flesh's thinking takes over!

At this same time, Moses was on the mountain receiving the law of God, the schoolmaster to lead the thoughtful in Israel to Christ. He was given also the divine pattern for the tabernacle and specific instructions for its building; and with that accomplished, how to consecrate it, to make it holy to the Lord. Aaron and his sons were also to be consecrated, fitted, along with the Levites, for the work of His holy habitation. All this was granted in His mercy to teach, inspire and lead His people to salvation—deliverance from the law of sin and death—if they could perceive and obey, seeing with the eye of faith the promised Messiah. Moses descended from the mount and became aware of his people's evil doing. And then God in anger spoke to faithful Moses:

"Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation."

Exodus 32:10.

Fervently Moses besought that for His name's sake, God would not destroy Israel, and was heard for "the LORD repented

of the evil which he thought to do". Here was compassion and forgiveness, yet 3,000 men of Israel fell that day. Also, Moses in his distress cast down the two tables of testimony, the writing of God, breaking them. How devastating these events were to our brother and to those carefully attentive in Israel. The stone tables, "written with the finger of God", pointing the way to salvation, were destroyed. Yet the Almighty's mercy shone forth once again:

"... Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest."
Exodus 34:1.

Moses went again into the mount for another forty days, and God again caused to be engraved upon the tables "the words of the covenant the ten commandments". (Verse 28) As Moses returned to his people he:

"... wist not that the skin of his face shone. . . ."
Exodus 34:29.

When all Israel observed his countenance, "they were afraid to come nigh him" in awe of God's wondrous power. This shining reminds us of the blessing of Israel by Aaron as instructed by their God:

"The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:
The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:
The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."
Numbers 6:24-26.

God had indeed looked upon Moses, and His holy presence reflected in His servant's face for all of Israel to see and fear. There could be no question that their leader indeed had been with God and that He indeed had spoken to him, even though Moses could not look upon that holiness.

What did Moses convey to Israel upon his return from the second forty-day stay?

"... This is the thing which the LORD commanded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD; . . ."
Exodus 35:4-5.

And Moses then spoke of God's tabernacle of which He had instructed. He told them of the materials required. This offering for His habitation had to be from His people, those of a willing heart. Willing means from a heart loving God and determined for this work. It could not be half-hearted nor grudging; nor because others were offering and one who did not would appear to be lacking. If the offerings for God's house were not from such a heart, they would be unacceptable.

Let us review for a moment. Moses was given this pattern during his first forty days in the mount, with the instruction, "look that thou make them after their pattern. . . ." (Exodus 25:40) This pattern spoke of His purpose in Christ. Now, after the second work in the mount, God instructed that the materials must be brought of a quality and kind which could be used for the divine pattern; nothing was haphazard or careless. How sobering, for God would know their hearts and observe their manner. It was then time to be about the work. There was first the plan, then the materials offered, and finally the consummation of this in careful, specific work. For this He appointed Bezaleel whom:

"... he hath filled . . . with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship;
And he hath put in his heart that he may teach, both he, and Aholiab. . . ." Exodus 35:31,34.

Once again God required that the heart be involved. Too, we are shown who were allowed to participate:

"Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, even every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it:" Exodus 36:2.

To stir up implies a lifting above material labors or thoughts. God's wisdom was imparted to these special people. The response of those whose hearts were touched might be—I must do it, my heart tells me the work is a wonderful privilege; I want to please Him with all my heart and effort. Not all in Israel would feel so, but those who did would doubtless make it the first work of their daily lives, their best in time and effort. And so the holy work began, and with many such wise and willing participants, was soon finished. All those having a part could rejoice that they had given such effort.

Now, as the work was finished, Moses was told:

“On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation.”

Exodus 40:2.

He went about this work, finishing it according to the divine pattern, and then:

“... a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.” Exodus 40:34.

How reassuring to Moses, to Aaron, to all the wise hearted in Israel, as they saw God’s glory so remarkably evident, and also in the pillar of cloud and fire! God’s face did indeed shine upon His people. They knew His presence was there, that He would commune with them through Moses or their high priest from between the cherubim, as He had promised in the mount. His guidance and counsel was with them, leading them toward their inheritance. There would be troubles, rebellion, reluctance because of fear; yet their God was ever helping, sometimes chastening, but always present to sustain those who saw His purpose and valued it, remembering the sure promises to Adam, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So let us ask ourselves: Do we perceive this grace revealed here? Are we helped to a deeper conviction that this same Almighty God looks upon and is with His people today? True, there are only a few, but what a blessed remnant, called out of this evil world, granted hope of life for eternity in a perfect kingdom, led by the One who was promised from the beginning.

Perhaps David’s words read this morning help us respond to such overwhelming grace. It was to David that God promised a Son, an eternal house, and a kingdom to be fulfilled in Jesus’ second coming to accomplish His Father’s will. With this in mind David wrote:

“The LORD reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be moved.”

Psalms 99:1.

As he penned these words, his mind would be fastened upon the house yet to be established by the greater Son of David. Until then he recognized that God reigns over His creation, communing from between the cherubim, but only with those whose hearts are

stirred up and fixed upon that house to come. Through all the ages these, because of willing and wise-hearted service, will have a part in that spiritual house whose pattern we have considered today. David's understanding and hope is expressed in his words:

"Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth."
Psalms 80:1.

Can we discern how surely his whole life was fixed as he waited in faith and patience for God to shine forth, the earnest of which He did upon Moses, causing his face to shine? David's further plea was repeated three times in this Psalm:

"Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved."
Psalms 80:3,7,19.

This face will one day shine upon all whom Jesus has judged to be His; those who have worked to build His house, having a part in it; those whose hearts were stirred up, and so were willing and wise hearted. This hope brings to mind John's words concerning the revelation of "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Revelation 21:2) This was in vision Jesus' bride, glorified as saints, united to Him. Of this figure we are told:

"... the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."
Revelation 21:23.

Just as in the tabernacle's most holy place there was no light, other than the glory of God revealed over the mercy seat, between the cherubim, so the presence of God and of His Son will shine forth in the kingdom age, upon those who are His kings and priests, united to His Son in the work of ruling and mediating over all the earth. David has expressed it for us this morning:

"Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.
Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness."
Psalms 97:11-12.

Oh, we pray, may we be among those so blessed.

J.A.DeF.

**"TAKE HEED THAT YE DESPISE NOT
ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES"**

There was a question among Jesus' disciples as to who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. In answer, the Lord Jesus placed a little child in their midst saying:

"... Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 18:3.

The disciples were to carry on the work of ministering to the gospel after the Lord Jesus' ascension. How important then that they understood that vain and prideful speculations regarding who would be greatest could not be part of their thinking. Only those who would change and become as a little child before God would please Him:

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 18:4.

In recognizing what one is like naturally the disciples learned a valuable lesson toward converting themselves. All who in this way attain to the kingdom of heaven will know God's special favor in becoming rulers with His Son, great in power and holiness, above all mankind.

Here the Lord Jesus explains further how precious these little children are to the Father:

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 18:10.

To despise means to think down about which can be in an adversarial manner, apt to hinder. The Lord Jesus' purpose was to bring these little ones to God and so any who opposed this effort would come the wrath of God. In this regard we can look back upon men like Abraham, Moses and David, who relied upon God as little children in their trusting nature, these were great men in their day

who humbled themselves in reaching out to their Father for guidance. They were cared for and often defended when at times they were despised.

It is easy to think little of another if the mind is not spiritually inclined and so how important that the disciples who carried on the Lord Jesus' work did not have this attitude:

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen how can he love God whom he hath not seen?
And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also." I John 4:20-21.

The flesh naturally looks down on someone who thinks differently, but this is against the law of God which clearly says to, "love thy neighbour as thyself."

Despising can take various avenues, sneering or deriding, or simply not considering the thoughts of others as valid and important thus displaying a serious spiritual lack. The letters to the seven ecclesias sent by the Spirit through John condemned this practise known as Nicolaitanism—a lording over the laity, a form of despising or feeling superior to others. When David brought up the ark to Jerusalem with joyful song and dance he was despised by Michal his wife because of his spiritual exuberance:

"And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod.
And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal, Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart." II Samuel 6:14,16.

In this example, Michal's despising of one of God's little ones resulted in serious consequences, for in so doing she not only revealed her contempt for David but for his God when she said:

"How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!
And David said unto Michal, It was before the LORD,

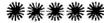
which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD.

And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour.

Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death." II Samuel 6:20-23.

As we reflect upon these thoughts, how evident it becomes that we must value and respect all of these little ones whom God has called to be His children. For we recognize that however much we may do in the service of God, we are all "unprofitable servants".

M.C.S.



PARTIAL INSPIRATION—the trouble of 1885 (continued)

Is the Bible the work of inspiration?

(R. Roberts tackles the apostasy)

"The question is not as to translations, but as to the original writing. Yet the answer to the original writing will apply substantially to the translations, because the translation of a book into another language is a mere feat of technical expertness by which the ideas expressed in one tongue are reproduced in the appropriate terms of another—a work, doubtless, of some difficulty, in some cases, because of the idiomatic and constructive differences between one language and another, but not a work for which inspiration is necessary.

What is called "genius" in natural writers may illustrate. It requires this "genius" to write Tennyson's poems; but any Frenchman with a good knowledge of English, could render them into French; and in French, they would for all practical purposes, have the stamp of Tennyson's idiosyncrasies, as much as in the original English. Or let us say, a political article appears in a Russian paper, "inspired" by the Government of the country; the article is translated into English, and appears in the Times; it is as much an inspired article in English as it is in Russian (A substantially correct translation is a matter of course). It is the ideas expressed that are everything; the form of the expression is only secondary.

If therefore, we say the Bible, as originally written in Hebrew and Greek, is the work of inspiration, the answer will apply to the English Bible, which for all practical purposes is a substantially correct translation of the original. The integrity of the original is not affected by the number and diversity of the mss. which have been brought to bear in settlement of the "text". On the contrary, these yield a ground of increased confidence as to authenticity because although textual variations of a certain sort are numerous as between ms. and ms., there is substantial correspondence in the many hundreds of mss. that have been discovered, into whatever language they are found to have been translated. To revert to the illustration of Tennyson, Tennyson is Tennyson, whether you find him in Italian, Spanish, French, Russian or Chinese. Slight variations in particular phrases would not interfere with the character of the work. And it is the character of the work that is everything in the present case.

Our question relates at this time to the Old Testament. The inspiration of the New Testament is conceded (inconsistently enough as we shall see) by those who hold loose views of the inspiration of the Old Testament. Consequently, we may leave the New Testament out of account in the present enquiry, except in so far as it may be brought to bear in the determination of the character of the Old Testament.

There are two ways of studying the question, one of which is unspeakably more direct and conclusive than the other. The one that is not conclusive is the plan of studying the Old Testament by itself, and judging it by the principles ordinarily applicable in the determination of literary problems. By this plan, a man will never reach solid ground. Ordinary principles of criticism will never explain the Bible i.e. the Bible will not adapt itself to the requirements of such principles, nor will it yield a true knowledge of its character to their application, for a good reason as we shall see. The German mystic, Novalis, or Paul Jean Richter (we forget which), pronounces the Bible "the problem of authorship", in the sense of being an insoluble problem: and Carlyle never attempted the subject through glancing now and then towards it.

The way that is direct and conclusive is this: Christ stands related to the subject. If he rose from the dead, his views of it are true, and the view also of his apostles, who, in that case, were illuminated by the Spirit of God expressly for their guidance into "all truth". In the present case, we assume the resurrection of

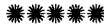
Christ, because it is conceded by those who have raised the question asked at the head of this article. We therefore propose to ask these questions:-

1/ What was the estimate of the Old Testament entertained by Christ and the apostles, as to its origin and character?

2/ Does the Old Testament itself bear evidence of the correctness of that estimate or otherwise?

3/ Is it possible to reconcile all the facts of the case with the view which they propound? We need not encumber the subject with any discussion of what is called the "canon" of the Old Testament. The material facts are simple. Some genuine writings were undoubtedly not preserved; and some spurious writings were never included (though bound up in some private copies). But the Old Testament, as we have it, is the Old Testament as it was in the hands of the Jews in the first century, as proved by Jewish and Christian witness. This was the Old Testament to which the allusions of Christ and the apostles apply, whether in Hebrew or Greek; consequently there is no difficulty in making a proper use of the argument."

(to be continued)



Letter from E.R.H.

"If we act as judges, then Christ may ask us who told us to try and do his work for him? There will be no PERFECT FELLOWSHIP this side of Christ's return. In regard to Sardis, Bro Roberts states in his book "Thirteen lectures on the Apocalypse" (Page 19 in my 1940 edition) under Sardis: He quotes Revelation 3:1 & 4 then comments: "from which we learn that MEMBERSHIP IN A DEAD ECCLESIA WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH INDIVIDUAL ACCEPTANCE WHERE WORTHINESS EXISTS." - - -

Fellowship is an individual matter, therefore John says in 1 John 1:7 "If we walk in the light as He (Yahwh) is in the light, we have fellowship ONE WITH ANOTHER and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

That was the case of the MINORITY IN THE ECCLESIA AT Sardis who Jesus commended. The minority were never commanded to go and set up a separate ecclesia. Bro Roberts was "one

of the pioneers of the Truth" and expressed his view in regard to Sardis—a "DEAD ECCLESIA" in the words above.

How did things work out under apostolic fellowship? We have Peter's words about what the ecclesias were like and we also have Jude's. Those complained of were "in the truth" as we would say today. I know of no ecclesia where behaviour like that takes place. (2 Peter 2:10 to 22). They were in the Truth because Peter says in verse 15 that they had "forsaken the right way" and from verse 21 they HAD known the way of righteousness. Jude speaks in the same strain.

When John wrote his epistles something had happened. No doubt they were in the majority and the warning of Peter, Jude and John irritated them. Peter, Jude and John stood their ground. The evil doers therefore "walked off." It was THEY who set up separate ecclesias which became the foundation of Roman Catholicism. In John's 3rd epistle Diotrephes refused even to fellowship THE INSPIRED APOSTLE JOHN! It was Diotrephes who cast THE MINORITY out of the ecclesia. No doubt there was MUCH trouble in the ecclesias and John wrote to a sister and told her not to even invite such persons into her house. And so in 1 John 2:18 John labelled these disruptive persons in the ecclesias as "antichrist" and in verse 19 he says THEY WENT OUT FROM US because they were not OF US". If they had believed and taught the Apostles doctrine and fellowship then John says "no doubt they would have continued with us".

In regard to Achan who flagrantly disobeyed the command of the Lord (Joshua 6:18-19) and therefore by his action ROBBED GOD. It was GOD who dealt with the matter first by what happened at Ai and then by the way in which the offender was found and put to death. Each ecclesia in Revelation chapters 2 and 3 were judged on THEIR OWN MERITS and it is the same today. "The LORD knoweth those who are HIS" (2 Timothy 2:19) - - - -."

The Remnant's reply

Now it is true that Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." (Matthew 7:1) But He also said, "Judge righteous judgment." (John 7:24) We cannot say that Jesus contradicted Himself. Our correspondent is right to say that Christ would not have us ACT as judges. But He also requires the upholding of His Truth. This does mean that there is a collective responsibility to do this;

and a collective responsibility must mean an individual responsibility as well. R. Roberts led the Ecclesia to exercise such care for the Truth in the "Inspiration Division". We believe it would be wrong to criticise R. Roberts for what he did; he loved the Truth and the stand he made was because of that love. It was not a question of some "walking off" at that time. Rather was it that R. Roberts took decisive action to stem the declension in the Ecclesia, and those who did not support his effort were not fellowshiped.

We agree with our correspondent, going back to early times, that evil doers set up separate ecclesias, and these developed into world-wide apostasy. The declension would have been stemmed if those early ecclesias had listened to the voice of the Spirit. Evil however prevailed. This simple fact is proof that if the Truth is to be preserved the evil must be resisted and rejected, and this means the exercise of judgment, individually and also collectively if there are sufficient members left who can band themselves together for mutual support.

The message to Sardis has been referred to by our correspondent. We feel it appropriate to add to the quotation of our correspondent the words of R. Roberts that follow what he quotes:-

"Even those who are lacking have an opportunity which they are exhorted to use. "Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, which are ready to die - - -. Repent." There is this encouragement to repentance: He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels."

Doctor Thomas also refers succinctly to the Sardian condition as follows:-

"Whatever is not of the truth is defiling before God. Every "reasoning", lofty conception, and thought, not according to the knowledge of God, is polluting, and engenders disobedience and apostasy. The faith is perverted, and the practice marred. Such was the condition of the presbytery in Sardis—defiled by human tradition and dead, a type of all "Christendom" at this day.

But even in this city of the dead there were "a few" living

ones—a remnant, that “Contended earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints,” and kept it. These were of the same class as “the rest among the Thyatirans” who held not the teaching of Jezebel; nor had acknowledged the depths of the Satan as they taught. They watched and kept their garments that they might not walk naked, and be exposed to shame, at the coming of the Lord—chapter 16:15. “Blessed” are such; for, saith the Spirit, “they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.”

We see from these words that Doctor Thomas believed there had been a division at Sardis. We also see that R. Roberts believed those addressed by the Spirit at Sardis were required to repent (change) and overcome. This would require action, even as Doctor Thomas indicates. Those who remain in apostacy cannot change, and they certainly cannot be strengthened by a continuing attachment to mortification. Perhaps the analogy from the book of Haggai will help.

“If one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread, or pottage, or wine, or oil, or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priests answered and said, No.

Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean?

And the priest answered and said, It shall be unclean.

Then answered Haggai, and said, So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the Lord - - -”

(Haggai 2:12-14)

Here then is a divine principle, that contact with the dead is defiling. The “holy” cannot restore “the dead to holiness.” But the dead, inevitably, causes the “holy” to become unclean in the eyes of the Spirit.

A BIBLE CLASS

"Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way. ."
Proverbs 1:31

These inspired words of Solomon hold a grave warning to those whom the Spirit has addressed as "simple ones" (verse 22). These scorn the wisdom of God's counsel and are then as "fools" in the Spirit's judgment. Solomon warns that to despise God's advice and reproof brings destruction. But wisdom's path leads in the way of God and brings the reward of obedience. Solomon warns:

"Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices." Proverbs 1:31.

These going off in their own direction, seeking their own wilful interests will eat only of the fruit of the seed they have sown, being left to their own devices or solutions. The reason is given:

**"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;
But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:"** Proverbs 1:24-25.

Solomon again speaks of the consequences for those who refuse understanding:

"His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins. He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray." Proverbs 5:22-23

This is the same message given—that death without hope is the end of those who refuse God's instruction. But there is another path to take:

**"The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.
The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness."** Proverbs 11:5-6.

A straightforward teaching that as one sows so shall one reap. Those who turn to their own devices will reap the corruption of their own flesh as Paul reminds:

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.
For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Galatians 6:7-8.

When we think of reaping fruits we think of a farmer who must prepare the soil, plant, and cultivate in order to bring forth fruit, all of which entails a great deal of work. When he wants a certain fruit the husbandman sows that particular seed. It is a premeditated decision in order to harvest that fruit which is desired.

We have outlined by Paul the fruit or outworkings of the fleshly way:

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Galatians 5:19-21.

This aptly describes the world today, those who live for the moment, addicted to the instant gratification of the natural man without thought for tomorrow. Yet tomorrow will come bringing regret but too late:

"Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:
For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:"

Proverbs 1:28-29.

The Lord Jesus warned that His return will come suddenly catching many unawares, as did the flood in spite of Noah's witnessing:

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark.

And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Matthew 24:37-39.

Because of God's mercy, Noah witnessed for one hundred and twenty years to warn of the destruction to come, but obviously most heedlessly sought their own ways, refusing God's wisdom as testified by His servant Noah. When the waters began to rise, many no doubt sought to enter the ark but it was too late, the door had been closed and their opportunity lost. What a valuable lesson that the time to work for the fruits that can lead to everlasting life is during our probation, listening to God's wisdom and instruction and growing in the fear of the the Lord.

That instruction is partly in receiving chastening with a right spirit as Paul taught his Hebrew brethren:

"... ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"

Hebrews 5:5-7.

David also helps with this thought:

"Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God."

Psalms 50:23.

Our conversation is our way or walk. Do we walk in the broad and well travelled way of the world or are our steps confined to His way, guided and directed by His precepts? The Lord Jesus warns that to walk in the path of the world is to share their destruction:

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Matthew 7:13-14.

This is a warning for ourselves that few have seen or taken advantage of that narrow gate, preferring to enjoy the temporary benefits that the world can offer, but for them there is to be no long lasting peace as promised by the Spirit to those who walk in His way.

"I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him.

But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

Isaiah 57:19-21.

That day of accountability is soon coming. As we wait for the Lord Jesus' return to establish justice and judgment in the earth and to abolish the works and workers of iniquity let us struggle to be ready.

M.C.S.

Signs of His Coming and of the End of the World

"How are the things of Esau searched out! how are his hidden things sought up! --- For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever."

(Obadiah verses 6 & 10)

Israel's parliamentary election campaign in June was said to have been the most personalised in Israel's history. It brought about a great political change. The "Likud" Party lost its power after a long period in office (15 years) and was replaced by "Labour". The defeated prime minister and his supporters, however, promised to wage "a vigorous struggle" in opposition to prevent the new government and its allies from "implementing policies that are dangerous to Israel." The new Labour leader is a former soldier turned politician and is the first sabra (native-born) prime minister. Born in Jerusalem in 1922 he was the son of immigrant Russians. In 1940 he joined the Haganah militia and helped Jewish refugees break the British blockade to come to Palestine. He fought in the battles of Independence in 1948, becoming chief of staff in 1964 and presided over Israel's victory against its Arab enemies in 1967, and was acclaimed as the liberator of East Jerusalem. In 1968 he went to Washington as Israel's ambassador, returning home in 1973. He became active in the Knesset after the Yom Kippur war of 1973. Then in 1974 he succeeded Golda Meir as prime minister. He was involved in agreements with Egypt and Syria in disengaging their respective forces, which brought about the Egyptian President's peace initiative of 1977. However, due to some family trouble he resigned in 1977, and the election that followed brought "Likud" to power, which ended almost 30 years of Labour Party rule.

Now it seems most significant, that suddenly, this important leader is restored to power. Even becoming the head of the Labour Party in February when he defeated his rival in Labour's first direct primary elections.

In 1987, by party agreement, he was defence minister; and when the Palestinian intifada rose up in 1987, he handled this grievous trouble in a very firm way. On the other hand he sensibly pulled Israel's troops out of Lebanon after the 1982 war.

His new policy, now that he has prime ministerial power, is to separate Jews and Arabs, and to this end he has said that in future he hopes the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza will stay at home. At the time of writing he is endeavouring to formulate a

scheme for Palestinian autonomy, but insists on having no dealings with the Palestine Liberation Organisation. West Bank Jewish settlers are somewhat dismayed by this change in events, which could mean that their homes will be swapped for a peace agreement with the Arabs. The new leader, however, maintains his firm stance on what he deems to be essential defence, saying that he will not negotiate over East Jerusalem, or the Golan Heights, and certain parts of the West Bank.

Political observers are now making comments that there is possibility of peace in the Middle East after 44 years of conflict.

The former prime minister has admitted that if he had stayed in power he would have boosted the number of settlers in the occupied territories while dragging out peace talks. "I would" he said, "have conducted the autonomy negotiations for 10 years, and in the meantime we would have reached half a million souls in Judea and Samaria (the West Bank). I didn't believe there was a majority in favour of a Greater Israel, but it could have been attained over time.--- without such a basis there would be nothing to stop the establishment of a Palestinian state."

The new leader however hopes to "recruit capital from Europe to create jobs in the (occupied) territories," to improve the living standards of Arabs.

This generous political attempt however, will not be appreciated by Arabs. The scriptural warning indicates that whatever encouraging response by Arabs to good intentions by Jews in endeavours for reconciliation, underneath enmity will linger. As the scripture expresses it, "How are the things of Esau searched out! how are his hidden things sought up!"

Such Arab enmity is condemned in unmistakable terms,"- - - thou shouldest not - - - have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress." (Obadiah verse 12)

It is only by divine solution that there will be a resolving of the Palestinian-Israeli hostility. As Obadiah expresses it:-

"- - - Saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's."
(verse 21)

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

It is planned, God willing, to continue our witness to the Christadelphian body by offering a free booklet on the Doctrine of Fellowship to any who may be interested.

Recent vacations for many have provided needed rest and relaxation from everyday responsibilities. Gratitude is felt for the blessing of suitable weather allowing a fuller enjoyment and appreciation of God's handiwork.

J.A.Def.

MANCHESTER, *Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.*

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

We continue to have response from Ireland from people interested in Bible prophecy. This is encouraging, especially as there is also interest in other areas.

We also feel gratitude for help and guidance in matters which have required counselling.