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# The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of  
Papal and Protestant Christendom

A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

"Take heed that ye be not deceived"

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**"AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD"**

**"THERE BE MORE WITH US THAN WITH HIM"**

This week we have been following the circumstances of Judah, Hezekiah, and their city Jerusalem as the power of Assyria came against them. Hezekiah, through his trust in God, was helped to withstand this ominous threat. A look at what he faced will help us discern the source of that trust, and thereby we can find help ourselves as events at times seem threatening or even overwhelming. The Assyrians under Shalmaneser had conquered and dispersed the ten tribes of Israel a few years earlier under God's hand because:

"... the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam ... " Until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight. ... So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day."  
II Kings 17:22-23.

At this time, of which we are reading, eleven years after Israel's downfall, this same power was threatening Judah, a seemingly hopeless position for them. We know the outcome. Hezekiah, with trust in God, prepared for this invasion:

"... he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken. ...

And he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together ... and spake comfortably (to the heart) to them, saying,

Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria ... for there be more with us than with him: With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah."  
II Chronicles 32:5-8.

It was his trust in God that enabled him to comfort his people, helping them to believe that their God would indeed fight for them.

It was in that same year, the fourteenth of Hezekiah's reign, that the king also fell grievously ill:

"In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death ... "

II Kings 20:1.

What an overwhelming time for Judah's king! He was dying, and Assyria was threatening Judah with the same fate that the ten tribes had experienced. Turning to God, Hezekiah prayed earnestly:

"I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore."  
II Kings 20:3.

His cry was heard. God in mercy looked upon his distress and sent Isaiah with a message of comfort:

"...I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee. . . .  
And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria ... for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake."  
II Kings 20:5-6.

The Almighty did indeed heal Hezekiah and also destroyed Sennacherib's army without Judah's raising a hand. Sennacherib died in the house of his god at the hands of his own sons. What great works God wrought on behalf of Judah and their king! Why was God so merciful to Hezekiah and to Jerusalem, having just allowed the ten tribes to be overthrown? Was it not because of the reliance on Himself and a belief in His prophet? The king's strong conviction was: "there be more with us than with him". What was the source of such sure reliance? Was it not the hand of God working through His prophet, whose words of comfort to Hezekiah are so impressive, just prior to Sennacherib's arrival? The Almighty knew what lay ahead and commanded His prophet:

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.  
Speak ye comfortably (to the heart) to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: . . ."  
Isaiah 40:1-2.

God spoke these words as He had earlier seen the quick action of Hezekiah to put away the evil of his father Ahaz, who "provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers" (See II Chronicles 28:26). When Hezekiah succeeded Ahaz:

"... he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord...  
He in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the LORD, and repaired them."  
II Chronicles 29:2-3.

What zeal and diligence, exhibiting his strong desire to do rightly and to lead his people back to God. In addition he had instructed the Levites to "carry forth the filthiness out of the holy

place" and sanctified the Levites (who had left their duties) to once again do the work of God's house. The king's determination was clear:

"Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us. My sons (Levites), be not now negligent: for the LORD hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and burn incense."

II Chronicles 29:10-11.

The Passover was once again kept, the idols destroyed under Hezekiah's direction. God saw it and was pleased. Isaiah, who prophesied during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, surely had an early influence upon Hezekiah's thinking, moving him to fear and to honor God even before, at the age of twenty-five, he became king. How wonderfully God blessed Hezekiah in sending Isaiah to encourage and give strength just prior to his illness and Sennacherib's appearance. God's word through His prophet read this morning, may have helped the king to grow in that trust:

"Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he."  
Isaiah 41:4.

Isaiah reminded the king of God's exceeding grace in that He has called a few from the generations since Adam, has promised a seed, in whom the faithful of all generations will be blessed. Hezekiah thought upon this - remembering: "I am Yahweh, the first, and with the last." God will not fail His faithful ones, bringing them to the glorious end of His purpose. To those who respond and never depart from their calling, the reward is, to be enfolded into His purpose and holy name for ever. How inspiring to their spirits, causing the king and his people to look to God for their deliverance. His words through Isaiah continued:

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."  
Isaiah 41:10.

How sapping of our strength and faith fear can be! At times we all experience dismay, doubt or uncertainty of which way to go.

Must not our eye be single, Brethren and Sisters, looking to the "I AM", to Yahweh, the Eternal for guidance and purpose in our battle to conquer fear? Hezekiah did so as he felt threatened with disaster at his enemies' hands, added to which was his life-threatening illness. How often he must have sought refuge in God's promise: "I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee." He believed God; he was fortified, made alert and steadfast, feeling surrounded by protective power, even as David experienced and reminds us in our frailty:

"I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34:4,7.

To those who fear Yahweh, there is the promise: "I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isaiah 41:10). What great power is in His right hand, extended not because of our righteousness but in His great mercy toward those who, though weak and failing, seek to honor Him. God enlarges upon this blessing through His prophet:

"For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not, I will help thee." Isaiah 41:13.

What wonderful comfort we can find as children of the Father who holds our right hand, leading, restraining, assuring. What have we to fear? Was this gracious promise Hezekiah's refuge when faced with impending death and a devastating enemy?

How much he must have clung to God's hand, as he spoke to the hearts of his people:

"... there be more with us than with him:

With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. . . ."

II Chronicles 32:7-8.

Deliverance was granted; Sennacherib was defeated and Hezekiah's life was extended for fifteen years.

During these added years, the king was put to a test by his God as the record tells us:

"Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart." II Chronicles 32:31.

Hezekiah was flattered at their coming and later told Isaiah:

“ . . . there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.”  
II Kings 20:15.

He revealed a human pride in his prosperity, forgetting that the “wonder” was done by God, and the added blessings were granted by Him as well. We are shown that God “left him, to try him”. This can happen to us as well, Brethren and Sisters. “Left” means relinquished or loosened. Was not God’s right hand loosened for a short time to prove Hezekiah’s heart? Would he choose humility and care - God’s way; or, his own in this opportunity to reveal his heart? Hezekiah faltered here, failing to hold on to the Almighty’s strong hand. Is this not a warning for us? As we often sing: “The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad” (Psalm 126:3). Let us keep these “great things” always in our minds, holding tightly to His guiding hand, recognizing His grace in the promise - “I will help thee”. The end of that help is revealed for us in the Father’s encouragement through Isaiah:

“Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.  
For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.”  
Isaiah 51:1,3.

As we sing these words, are they truly from our hearts? Will we cling to them, conforming each day to that which is pleasing and acceptable to the God of all comfort?

*J.A.DeF.*

### THE HANDMAID OF THE LORD

The record in Luke permits us to once again reflect upon the inspiring message of the Lord Jesus' birth. These events are viewed with a misdirected sentimentality by the world today, yet are recorded that those understanding the word of God, may better perceive the hope set before them.

The Scriptures tell us how Gabriel, an angel of the Lord, came to Mary, a virgin of the house of David, to convey to her the wondrous part she was to play in God's purpose:

"Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 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:

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. . .the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Luke 1:30-33,35.

This birth would ultimately fulfill the promises made both to Abraham and to David, as well as to Adam and Eve, of the One who would bruise the serpent's head - the Messiah and Son of God. Mary, being a faithful Jew, would know of these prophecies and perhaps even as she heard this blessed news from Gabriel would recall Isaiah's words:

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel (God is with us).

Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good."

Isaiah 7:14-15.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever."

Isaiah 9:6-7.

Mary received the news that she was to be mother to the Savior with an acceptance and calm derived from faith and humility saying:

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

Luke 1:38.

The word "handmaid" comes from a prime root meaning to bind - an appropriate thought for one revealing a mind bound to God's word in submission, grateful to be chosen to play a part in its fulfillment. Undoubtedly, this was why the Almighty had selected her, for the events following the conception and birth of the Lord Jesus would require great courage and strength of character. Was she afraid of what lay ahead? Perhaps, but her initial response reflected willingness, gratitude and joy at being chosen, a vessel for the Spirit's work:

"My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."  
Luke 1:46-47.

David, in his time, also magnified the Lord, making His word large in his living, revealing a spirit kindred with Mary's, as he responded in submission and humility:

"... I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.  
I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thansgiving."  
Psalm 69:29-30.

David, though king of Israel, viewed himself an afflicted and lowly man in need of God's mercy and direction - bound in faith to His word and grateful for the promises given. Mary's mind was much the same - not lofty in pride, but responding with awe and perception to the Spirit's blessing:

"... he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.  
And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation."  
Luke 1:48-50

She must have realized that a complete trust and submission to God would be required of her - allowing His hand to guide in the years ahead, knowing the great responsibility that was hers, to nurture and lead this child in His early years.

Hannah, another mother who raised her son Samuel to magnify the Lord, exhibited the same submissive gratitude, opening her heart to God as she prayed:

"... My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation. There is none holy as the

LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.

He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed."

I Samuel 2:1-2, 9-10.

Her response displayed a keen spiritual understanding of God's purpose with His people and the promised fulfillment to come through the anointed One, permitting her to feel as did Mary, a handmaid of the Lord, filled with thanksgiving for the power of His hand in her living. A reminder to us today that we too are called upon to respond with humility and thanksgiving as did Hannah and Mary.

Mary's example teaches of the need to submit to God's indication with acceptance and trust - watchful and perceptive of His guidance in our living, knowing that like Mary, David and Hannah we may not realize all of what lies ahead, but must in faith submit with humbleness and trust to whatever comes. Mary's obedience is an inspiration that we too may respond with joy and thanksgiving for His help and guidance, trusting ultimately in the deliverance promised to all those who, out of love and obedience, are bound to Him.

M.C.S.

## THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

In a recent article of the Christadelphian magazine the comment was made:-

"The question is not whether his wilderness temptations involved an external tempter - there has always been divided opinion in the Brotherhood on this subject, and there are problems with both views - but whether the Lord had the capacity to be tempted in the same way as we are."

May we suggest that to leave the matter in a vague and inconclusive position, while keeping a degree of peace with one side of the argument or the other, ought to be able to be determined by scriptural understanding.

One of the foundation stones of the Truth in these last days was Dr. Thomas's comment:-

"Sinful flesh was laid upon him, "that through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," or sin in the flesh: for "for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" - - - the devil and sin, though different words, represent the same thing. "Sin had the power of death", and would have retained it if the man, who was obedient unto death, had not gained the victory over it."

To suggest, as some do, that an angel tempted Jesus in the wilderness overlooks scriptural testimony. God's messenger would not have been sent to Jesus in the wilderness:-

"- - - for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust - - -." (James 1:13-14)

Furthermore we are told:-

"And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him FOR A SEASON." (Luke 4:13)

How could it be said that an angel tempter kept returning to test the obedience of Christ?

Then there is evidence in the account of Christ's temptation. For example:-

"And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence." (Luke 4:9)

Yet Jesus "--- was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. Being forty days tempted of the devil." (verses 1 & 2) After which He "--- returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee ---." (Verse 13) Obviously being in the wilderness He was never, actually, upon the pinnacle of the Temple. Therefore the words of verse 9 describe His thoughts. Again:-

"--- the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine."  
(verses 6 & 7)

This is clearly a figure of speech, for an angel of God would not ask Christ to worship him. And it cannot remotely be conceived that a man tempter would in any sense be able to give Christ the "kingdoms of the world". It would be a ridiculous offer, forming no temptation, by reason of its impossibility.

**PARTIAL INSPIRATION—THE TROUBLE OF 1885**

(continued)

R. Roberts continues his answers

Question Does not the apostle make a distinction between inspiration and his own judgment in 1 Cor. 7, when he says, "I speak this by permission not of commandment" (v 6), again, "I command, yet not I, but the Lord." "Concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord, yet I give my judgment"?

Answer Doubtless, Paul makes a distinction in these cases, but the very making of that distinction proves the inspiration of the ordinary run of his composition: for what need would there be for singling out certain utterances as human, if all his utterances were of the same character? Is not the making of this very distinction the result of the guidance of the Spirit of God? The Spirit directed Paul in all things pertaining to the work which he was sent to do: and therefore, it deserted him not when he began to pen things on which he had no express enlightenment from God, and which might have been otherwise taken if not qualified. It directed him to say, "To the rest speak I, not the Lord." "I give my judgment."

Question Can it be that the writer of the book of Job was moved by the Holy Spirit, seeing that God says to Job, at the end of the book, that his three friends had not spoken of him the thing that was right? Could what these three men said be the work of inspiration?

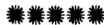
Answer The case is on a par with the blasphemous proclamation of Sennacherib, or the wicked oppositions of the Scribes and Pharisees. The Bible gives us a true - because Spirit-guided - report of what they said. What they said was their own, but the Bible record of their saying is a God-inspired reproduction of it, which God had made and given to His children for their guidance.

Question 1 Chron. 3 and Matt. 1 cannot both equally be the work of inspiration: because 1 Chron. gives 30 names, where Matthew only gives 27, and Matthew himself contradicts his own statement of the genealogy, because while giving only 27 names, he says there were twice fourteen generations, which would require 28 names.

Answer This is one of those questions of detail, the solution (or the difficulty of the solution) of which can in no way affect the conclusion established by the irrefragable argument unfolded in the beginning of the present number of the "Christadelphian". No man knows the facts sufficiently to account positively for every peculiarity of a complex case like this. Every informed man knows enough of such matters to know how easily such peculiarities might arise, and do arise without invalidating the truth of any of the statements,

but merely requiring some little missing link to establish perfect harmony. We do not know for example on what principle Matthew computed a generation - whether the actual interval from the birth of father to the birth of son, or from the death of the one to the death of the other, or by an average calculation for the length of life characteristic of each particular epoch. Nor do we know the principle on which the genealogy was drawn, whether honorary while literal, or literal purely. If the honorary element was before Matthew's mind (as influenced by the spirit), there might be reasons for ignoring certain links without breaking the chain. Such a principle is not unknown in Jewish trees of descent where a disreputable father is recognised only in his more worthy son. These considerations shew the flexible nature of the subject, and the possibility of both Chronicles and Matthew being both perfectly true while apparently different. A difference of omission is always open to the possibility of a reasonable explanation if we knew all the facts. It is not like an irreconcilable difference in the positive features.

(to be continued)



### THE DIVORCE AND POLYGAMY TROUBLES

After the 1923 Division between Temperance Hall and the Berean Christadelphians, A. T. Jannaway the brother of F. G. Jannaway in co-operation with one E. W. Browne commenced a publication called "The Christadelphian Family Journal". This circulated the Berean Body along with the official Berean magazine entitled "The Berean Christadelphian". In that "Family Journal" for November 1924, the following appeared:-

"That the question of divorce should be troubling some Ecclesias is not strange. It is due, of course, to the great and increasing wickedness of the world in regard to the sacredness of marriage. There is room for an article or two from some clear-thinking and scripturally-minded brethren on the subject. Unless we are fortified by an intelligent apprehension of what the Scriptures say, chaos and disaster will soon accrue to the brotherhood."

Towards the end of 1925, F. G. Jannaway, the brother of the aforesaid editor of "The Christadelphian Family Journal" received a request for guidance on the scriptural principles concerning divorce and re-marriage. F. G. J. took counsel. The findings eventually resulting in the following declaration:-

"That suing at law for the enforcement of any right whatsoever is to be shunned by a servant of Christ, as being out of harmony with his teaching - as exemplified by precept and example. (Matt. 5:39; 1 Cor. 6:1; 1 Pet. 2:21-23). We refuse to discuss the question of Divorce (which is now agitating the Ecclesias) as being a thing which should not be so much as named among us as becometh saints. (Eph. 5:3)"

But A. T. Jannaway was not in agreement. He stated that divorce was permissible if the ground was adultery, quoting Matthew 5:31-32, laying emphasis on the phrase "saving for the cause of fornication." Also he quoted a writing of R. Roberts in support of his position:-

"Divorce is inadmissible according to the law of Christ, except in the case he mentions, in Matt. 19:9. Where this case arises, and the parties are divorced, they are at liberty to marry again, both by human law and divine. Objections may be well meant, but it is without ground." (quoted in the C. D. Family Journal 1929 p188)

A. T. Jannaway and his supporters wanted divorce to be left as an "open question", as before; and any case, should such arise, to be dealt with on its merits. But it was F. G. Jannaway's proposition which obtained the greater support. As a result A. T. Jannaway and a minority left the Clapham (London) Ecclesia and began to meet at Bijou Hall, Clapham Common, calling themselves the Clapham (Common) Ecclesia.

F. G. Jannaway and The Berean published a circular on 18 May 1926 on the matter, raising the question "Are we at liberty to use legal coercion for the purpose of obtaining a right." An article also appeared in "The Berean Christadelphian" entitled "Is Suing at Law for Divorce consistent with the Law of Christ?" divorce being condemned as wrong.

W. J. Elston (of Nottingham) wrote on this subject in "The Berean Christadelphian" and on the 11 May 1926 produced a statement "that going to law for any cause was wrong, and declaring that marriage is indissoluble, having been made so by the Law of Christ which states 'What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder'. (Mark 10:9)"

"It was accepted that there is an exceptive clause in Matthew 5:31-32 where a wife can be put away for fornication, but in this there is no permission for legal divorce or re-marriage."

A. T. Jannaway thereupon challenged W. J. E's remarks, saying that Paul's condemnation of those going to law does not relate to divorce, and that re-marriage is permissible in adulterous circumstances. He stated the following:-

"Christ in Matt. 5:32 as in Matt. 19:9, lays it down that it is adultery to marry any person (male or female) who has been divorced from any cause which God has not sanctioned, but not otherwise. When a man or woman breaks wedlock, or becomes "one flesh" with any other than his or her lawful spouse, then God permits divorce."

A. T. J. later declared that though wrong to go to law to recover debts, or because of personal wrongs, yet where divorce is concerned:-

"No force is sought, but simply the authority of the Judge for a divorce (which Christ allows, Matt. 5:32: 19:9). Marriage, you must remember, can only take place by the consent of the law, and can only in this way be annulled."

("The Christadelphian Family Journal" 1929 p390) So we see that, even as the world trend moved away from the upholding of the sanctity of marriage, some in the ecclesias were also contaminated by the laxity. Yet the guidance of Christ is very clear:-

"--- they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Mark 10:8-9)

These words of Christ were in answer to a question about divorce. It is sad to note those who strove for a more lax approach to the subject, instead of looking to the sure guidance of scripture, went to a writing of R. Roberts who would never have wanted his brethren to regard him as an oracle, and who knew that he had on occasion made mistakes in advice that he had given.

The evils of the growing laxity, generally, in failing to uphold the divine marriage order, are now too obvious when the behaviour of the young is contemplated. It is a sobering thought, therefore, to consider the position of those who claim to be Brethren of Christ, and who therefore should know better, that they continue to be wracked in argument and turmoil over a subject on which Christ spoke so clearly.

(to be continued)

A BIBLE CLASS

"Take heed therefore that the light  
which is in thee be not darkness"

Luke 11:35

Our verse under consideration was spoken by the Lord Jesus as He preached to the multitude, exhorting them to walk in the light of Truth:

"No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness."

Luke 11:33-35.

Christ's ministry was like a candle, bringing the enlightenment of the gospel to a people who had been lost in the darkness of ignorance and tradition as taught by the scribes and Pharisees. These blind leaders sought to extinguish that light because it exposed their unrighteousness cleverly hidden beneath the guise of piety. Because of them, the Lord Jesus warned the people:

"... except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 5:20.

Those who received the Lord Jesus' teaching were exhorted to follow Him in singleness of purpose, reflecting the light of Truth in their living.

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

John 3:19-21.

So important was it to divide the light from the darkness that it was the first task of creation - an important lesson given by the

Spirit of the need to separate the light of godliness from the darkness of wickedness:

“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.  
And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided  
the light from the darkness.” Genesis 1:3-4.

As in the body, the eye must focus in order to see clearly, so too in a spiritual sense, attention must be focused upon the life of Christ with singleness of purpose, in order to develop those spiritual qualities He exhibited, so pleasing to the Almighty. If light turns into darkness, or the knowledge of God’s Truth is not kept pure, it is worse than if one had never known the Word, for enlightenment brings responsibility to the judgment seat of Christ to either acceptance and eternal life, or rejection and death.

How can we follow Him in order to receive the blessing of life eternal? John explains:

“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” I John 1:5-7.

How does one walk in darkness? When the eye is not fastened or focused on the light of Truth as illustrated by the Lord Jesus’ example, the mind can be distracted by the lure of worldly desires or be led astray by flesh-pleasing doctrine, thus contaminating the purity and thereby losing the fellowship with God and His Son. Paul’s epistle to the Ephesians warns of losing sight of the deliverance from darkness:

“Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”

Ephesians 5:6-8,11.

This is what the children of light must fasten upon - a walking in the light seen in Jesus, given by the grace of God, so that the precious hope of salvation is always foremost in their living:

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

Matthew 5:14-16.

Christ is the candle illuminating the way for those who seek to walk in Truth. Let us turn to that Light, allowing its radiance to shine forth in our living, knowing with surety that He is the Light and His footsteps are the path to the kingdom of God.

*M.C.S.*

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

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves - - - disobedient to parents - - - incontinent, fierce - - -"

(2 Tim.3:1-3)

An outcry continues about the violence so evident in the younger generation, and also the increase of house-breaking and theft in general. The Government tries desperately to convey that it is doing something about this malaise, but so far such efforts seem to be cosmetic and superficial, and not dealing with the basic problem. Of course this great deterioration fulfils those things about which the scripture has given warning. Men pride themselves in their scientific advancement; but in morality they greatly retreat.

Some time ago the British Home Secretary promised tougher measures against crime. For example the police were to be given new powers to stop trespassers. There would be also a scheme for voluntary "parish constables" to patrol villages. The maximum penalty for young offenders in special institutions would be doubled. And those serving community sentences should have harder work to do. But these things make little or no impression on the hardened thugs of the younger generation.

An amazing event in the Humberside area illustrates how desperate the situation is becoming. A group of city councillors went on a fact finding visit to a violent housing estate, but were forced to barricade themselves in an office when they were attacked by stone-throwing youths. They managed to telephone the police from their besieged position, and so under protection made their escape. Another fact finding council group, who had taken a lift in a block of flats were dismayed when one youth tried to climb on the top of their lift. The comments made by these local government officials after their experiences speak volumes. They said that what had happened had given them a lesson in what residents had to face. "It was the most disgusting behaviour and a typical example of what other people go through every day." "It must be very intimidating for decent, law-abiding people to have to live with this sort of behaviour. We cannot accept it any longer." But not accepting this evil is easier said than done.

A very sensible comment appeared some time ago in one of the national newspapers:-

"--- contrary to the doctrine of Rousseau which has misled us for 200 years, children - particularly boys - are not born innocent and later corrupted by a repressive society --- we should not be asking

ourselves how we can cure the incorrigible hard core of boys who are responsible for much of the crime committed in this country - -. They are, almost undoubtedly, simply extreme examples of the kind of hyperactive, difficult child who is well known in every school. So, if boys have always been thus, why do we only now have an unprecedented social problem with uncontrollable young criminals? Partly because we have made a conscious decision not to control them. Private and public morality is so saturated in the assumption that crime is UNNATURAL - that it only occurs when something has gone disastrously wrong - that we have lost the skills for dealing with bad behaviour before it escalates. We do not regard vicious impulses as a normal part of childhood which it is our moral responsibility as parents, teachers and neighbours, to suppress until children learn to control them for themselves---. All that we have done is to dismantle the apparatus which was best geared to manage a very difficult task of training young males.---

How true this is! To let things get out of hand and then seek for a cure is quite the wrong way to deal with the situation. The fact of the matter is that as men get further and further away from the counsel and wisdom of the Word of God, so do their troubles increase. The scripture is clear:-

“He that spareth his rod hateth his son: But he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.”

(Proverbs 13:24)

“Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”

(Proverbs 22:15)

“Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.”

(Proverbs 19:18)

There is no hope, now, for many of the young. They have become too hardened and uncouth. They are spoiled beyond rectification. And so society, because of its failure;-

“They would none of my counsel ---. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way ---.”

(Proverbs 1:30-31)

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

As the year 1994 begins, one questions what it will bring. World events, earthquakes, record flooding, hunger in many places, warfare, unrest and the appalling loss of moral standards are among the signs that may portend the return of Jesus Christ, who warns, "of that day and hour knoweth no man. . .but my Father only" (Matt.24:36).

*J.A.DeF.*

**MANCHESTER, *Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.***

Sunday:	Breaking of Bread 11.00 a.m.
Thursday:	Bible Class 7.15 p.m.

As this new year commences it is so easy to accept the marking off of the calendar without realising the full import of this provision.

At the Beginning, time commenced with the seven days of creation, and this numbering of the days has prevailed in men's calculations ever since, even though certain slight adjustments are made to compensate for the actual solar year.

The weeks, the months, the seasons and the years are God given. A provision to indicate to those who look to Him that His purpose with this good earth unfolds, leading ever onwards to that time of divine fulfilment for which all the marvels of creation are intended.