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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

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"AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD"

"THOU KNEWEST NOT THE TIME OF THY VISITATION"

For the past eight weeks we have been with Jeremiah as he, obeying God, prophesied to the people of Judah and Jerusalem. For forty-one years he did so—from the reign of Josiah to the final captivity of his nation. It was a long forty-one years, years of sadness and also suffering. For the most part, Judah did not listen, refusing to turn and repent of their stubborn ways. By the end of these painful years, Judah was captive in Babylon, Jerusalem was burned, and God's house was in ruins. There was no more a nation. It was a sadness for many, yet it was in accordance with the Almighty's word, exhibiting His righteous judgment.

This week we have begun to read The Lamentations of Jeremiah, revealing his grief and also God's sorrow that His people had adamantly refused to hear. The prophet might have felt that he had wasted those long years, believing, though, he had done all that God required, yet what a result! Devastation, captivity and great reproach upon Judah. These Lamentations reveal the prophet's mind at this tragic state, reflecting in a measure God's sorrow that His word had been utterly flouted. Let us listen to the prophet as he expressed his grief. In this way we may be touched, further moved to honor and glorify our Father. Each chapter of Lamentations expresses a particular aspect of Jeremiah's mind. To begin, he mourns deeply the state of Jerusalem:

"How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! . . . she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!
The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts . . . and she is in bitterness."

Lamentations 1:1,4.

This was the city which God desired and where He chose to place His name. Jerusalem is still far from a city of God. A Moslem mosque rests upon the site of the temple, and other "religious" edifices abound. Almost twenty-six hundred years after Jeremiah's time we find His name is still not truly there. Yet we know and trust in the faith and hope of Jeremiah that some day and soon, Jerusalem will be restored, becoming the place from which God's word will go forth to all the earth. It was that hope which sustained our grieving brother, and can strengthen our faith.

Jeremiah further mourns:

"How hath the LORD covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, and cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel . . .!"

Lamentations 2:1.

The glory, the honor, and the prestige among the nations that was once Israel's were gone, cast down because of their defiance toward the One who had granted such beauty. God is long suffering, but at His appointed time His wrath is seen exactly as He so often warned. It is a lesson for each of us lest we, too, grow lax and careless, absorbed in self-pleasing and thereby lose that hope of eternal life in His kingdom when Jerusalem shall forever be "The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth" (Lamentations 2:15).

Jeremiah also reflected upon his own position as a prophet:

"I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath."
Lamentations 3:1.

He suffered greatly in witnessing to God's will, threatened with death, enduring imprisonment, and accused as a traitor. Yet his mind in the midst of it all was:

"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed. . .
The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore I will hope in him.
The LORD is good unto them that wait for him. . . .
Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD."
Lamentations 3:22,24,25,40.

Cannot his thinking sustain us too, when we feel overwhelmed with sorrow and pressed down by contrary circumstances?

Jeremiah continued in grief:

"... the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street."
Lamentations 4:1.

These were the stones which David and Solomon had prepared so carefully according to the divine instructions regarding God's temple:

"And the house . . . was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building."
I Kings 6:7.

The word "ready" is shalem - perfect, whole, just - foreshadowing God's purpose. For when His "house" - the gathered faithful - is assembled at Jesus' return, each member will fit perfectly to the cornerstone: "... fitly framed together . . . unto an holy temple in the Lord" (Ephesians 2:21). As the prophet surveyed the ruins and saw those very stones scattered through the streets, we can clearly

understand his deep dismay. Yet his trust was sure that the Almighty ultimately would gather all those found to have been made "ready" when the Messiah returns. These thoughts do uplift and inspire us to look beyond the present time of frequent sorrow, with our hearts fastened upon God's promise to David, the man after His own heart. He spoke of a house and also a throne, a kingdom, and a king.

Returning to Jeremiah's lament, we find his longing for God's care and mercy:

"Remember, O LORD, what is come upon us: consider, and behold our reproach."
Lamentations 5:1.

What was that reproach? Were not God's chosen people in dire trouble, in captivity, God's city burned, His temple in ruins? What caused such shame and rebuke for all to see? It was the refusal of this blessed and privileged people to submit to His word. This brought forth His wrath against them, an outpouring of devastation for all to look upon. As Jeremiah considered this reproach, his sorrowful plea was:

"Thou, O LORD, remainest for ever; thy throne from generation to generation.
Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, and forsake us for so long time?
Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old."
Lamentations 5:19-21.

It was the prophet's prayer that the Almighty would in mercy look again to His children, helping them to return to Him, taking away their reproach. How few there were, and it is the same in every generation of mankind. Few wholly turn to Him, putting their trust, their lives into His hands, believing and acknowledging that He in mercy will guard and keep His faithful people until the fulfillment of all His promises.

Jeremiah wept over Jerusalem, fully knowing that the devastation was the work of God, and only after suffering long His people's years of hard-heartedness. He had testified of God's will for forty-one years and saw with pain their rebellious nature. God was right, he knew, yet he could not help but weep at this utter calamity.

Some six hundred years later, Jesus also wept over Jerusalem:
"Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies . . . shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another."
Luke 19:42-44.

The things which would belong to Jerusalem's peace - what were they? The prophet Isaiah helps us to understand as he spoke God's words to Israel in earlier years:

"O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea."
Isaiah 48:18.

The very name Jerusalem speaks of that peace (shalom) which will bless like a deep flowing river. This peace will be real and lasting when the coming Prince of Peace, ruling in righteousness, establishes Jerusalem as the center of His kingdom. His kings and priests will be those who in their lifetime have hearkened to the Father's will. While He was on earth Jesus experienced the refusal of those in Jerusalem to submit to God's word and wept as He knew that shortly (A.D. 70) Jerusalem, the temple and His people would again see destruction, this time by the hand of Rome. He plainly warned and told them the reason:

"... because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."
Luke 19:44.

What was the time of Jerusalem's visitation? "Time" is often used as a specific or due season, as for ripening fruit. "Visitation" implies oversight, watching or inspection. The Lord Jesus' teaching, His miracles, His death and resurrection declared that He was the promised Messiah, coming as ordained (in due season). Was not this Jerusalem's visitation? They did not perceive, or wish to do so. How was He received by those to whom He came? "Crucify Him." "We have no king but Caesar" - denying Him who had come at the time God specified to be their means of salvation. Here was the Prince of Peace to make a way for the peace of Jerusalem; but they knew not "the things which belong unto thy peace". This was their visitation, a further opportunity extended by the Almighty. And has not this been the history of mankind since Eden, when Adam and Eve failed to obey God's one simple command, a command with great promise?

Going back not to Jeremiah's time, Jerusalem did not recognize nor receive God's visitation, and was utterly destroyed. The prophet speaking of the siege to come revealed:

"For thus hath the LORD of hosts said, Hew ye down trees, and cast a mount against Jerusalem: this is the city to be visited: she is wholly oppression in the midst of her."

Jeremiah 6:6.

Can we see why this faithful man lamented, as the Almighty's visitation for destruction took place? We understand, too, why Jesus wept as He contemplated the soon-to-come destruction under the Romans.

Still another prophet had spoken about that day of visitation as he warned of their unrighteous ways:

"Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees . . . that . . . turn aside the needy . . . take away the right from the poor . . . that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!

And what will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from far? to whom will flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory?

Without me (God) they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain. . . ." Isaiah 10:1-4.

There is no longer hope when that fearful day "visits" if, like Jerusalem, there has been indifference - or worse, rebellion - a turning of one's back upon God. For those who value the Almighty's presence in their living, desiring His overseeing and correction, there is hope in the words of David:

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

That I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance."

Psalms 106:4-5.

Here there is no lamentation, but favor (delight) from above, the good of His chosen. Gladness and glory is the hope of all who wait with patience for the day of His visitation.

With David who trusted in God's promise, even in the depths of tribulation and reproach, may we also be permitted to:

"Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

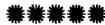
For his anger endureth but for a moment; in his favour is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

Psalms 30:4-5.

Almost we can hear Jeremiah echoing David's words as he sought strength and comfort during those forty-one years of witnessing - his time of weeping and lamentation. He, too, was sustained by promises which will be fulfilled without fail to His faithful people.

As we experience God's hand in so many ways, Brethren and Sisters, to correct, to comfort, to lift up, let us take courage, seek His strength to endure the long night of trial and patience. Let us fasten our hopes upon the coming day of the Lord, when His Son will wonderfully visit all His faithful children with deliverance from the bondage of flesh nature, and grant the joy of eternal and unblemished fellowship with His Son and Himself.

J.A.DeF.



PATIENT ENDURING IN OBEDIENCE"

Our readings from I Samuel, Isaiah and Luke provide helpful insight into the never changing purpose of God. Theirs is a consistent message teaching of the need for patient enduring in obedience in order to control the man of flesh.

This conflict between the flesh and spirit is illustrated in I Samuel, shortly after Saul was anointed king over Israel. Commanded to destroy the Amalekites, God's instructions were explicit:

"I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."

I Samuel 15:2-3.

Saul did not obey the Almighty, instead using man's fleshly reasoning, he kept the best of the spoil alive, explaining to Samuel that it was to be a sacrifice to God:

"... the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed."

I Samuel 15:15.

God did not view this disobedience lightly - in His eyes it was rebellion and He repented that He had made Saul King. Therefore He directed His prophet Samuel's question to Saul:

"Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king."
I Samuel 15:22-23.

Saul's sacrifices and oblations were counted as sin by God because they were done in disobedience, for his actions were to please self rather than God.

How different is the mind of spirit from the mind of flesh, which in appeasing itself can deceive into thinking it is serving God. This was the same subtlety which deceived Eve as the serpent said, "Ye shall not surely die". God, who does not lie, had said concerning the forbidden fruit, "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die" (Genesis 3:3). The self-serving inclinations within Eve were tempted by the serpent when he said:

"Ye shall not surely die:

For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."
Genesis 3:4-5.

She took the fruit, giving it also to her husband, and with eating they both sinned through disobedience. Thus was born the enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, and the warfare has continued since.

As Creator and Father, God demands obedience of His children - there is no middle ground in serving Him. That same message is seen in our second portion in Isaiah, as discerning a lack of obedience in His people, Yahweh declared:

"Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not."
Isaiah 65:12.

Those of Isaiah's day did not seek Him, forgetting that His promises were only for those who do:

"Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all.

And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.

And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me." Isaiah 65:8-10.

There have nearly always been a few in the midst of the many throughout the ages - a remnant who seek after Him in obedience, resisting the wrong and endeavoring in hope to obtain the blessings promised. While the flesh lives, that conflict will always be present, but the willing hearted desiring to serve Him will recognize its danger and earnestly seek strength from His word and the example established by His Son.

We see in our third reading in Luke through Jesus' Parable of the Sower, the same struggle:

"A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold." Luke 8:5-8.

Jesus clarified the parable to His disciples, explaining that the key ingredient - the seed - is the word of God. Obedience to that word can be hindered in many ways, as illustrated by the obstacles which impede the growth of good seed - the rocks, thorns and thistles, symbols of the many things which may tempt from the Spirit's path:

"They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." Luke 8:13-15.

Those of an "honest and good heart" take the knowledge of the Truth into their living, applying the Word with patient enduring, bringing forth spiritual fruits pleasing to the Almighty.

"With patience" intimates that this enduring is not a speedy process, but done over a long period of time, a constant struggle, coupled with humble subjection to God's precepts. An example of two with "honest and good hearts" can be seen in Caleb and Joshua, the two faithful spies who viewed the promised land along with ten of their brethren, yet saw with the eyes of the spirit, not the flesh. The other spies reported that:

"The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature.

And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight." Numbers 13:32-33.

Because of this fearful report, the people wept, dismayed at the hardships in conquering this land, murmured against Moses and Aaron, and clamored for a captain to lead them back to Egypt. Yet Joshua and Caleb with patient obedience, believed that God would deliver this land into their hand said:

"The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land.

If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.

Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not." Numbers 14:7-9.

Displeased with the unbelieving congregation God sought to destroy them, but because of Moses' intercession, they were instead sentenced to forty years wandering in the wilderness, never to see that promised inheritance. Only Joshua and Caleb were allowed to enter the land. They looked forward in faith to the promised time when the earth's inhabitants would dwell together in peace, ruled by the just and merciful hand of the Almighty. This inheritance is described by Isaiah:

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." Isaiah 11:6-9.

The earth full of the knowledge of God certainly is not seen today, but there is a sure hope for the future kingdom age for that blessed multitude, both Jew and Gentile, who have endeavoured to be found pleasing in the Almighty's sight through patient obedience to His word.

M.C.S.



Partial Inspiration - the trouble of 1885 (continued)
R. Roberts deals with further questions

Question It is said in 1 Kings 15:5 that "David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything he had commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite." But I find he broke several of God's commands. God forbids murder: David murdered 200 Philistines to get Saul's daughter (1 Sam. 18:25-27). Again, he murdered numbers of the subjects of King Achish who had befriended him, leaving neither man nor woman alive lest they should tell on him (1 Sam. 27:5-12). Also he marched against Nabal for the same purpose. Can such a contradictory account be inspired?

Answer The account is not contradictory. David did wrong in the matter of Uriah the Hittite; but he did not do wrong in other cases. This is easily seen when the scriptural idea of wrong is accepted. That only is wrong which God forbids. God forbids murder; but killing is not murder when He commands it. The killing of the inhabitants of Canaan was His command. It was part of Israel's appointed work only partially executed on entering the land (Deut. 7:2; 20:17). God reprov'd Israel because they had failed in the matter (Jud. 1:28; 2:2-3). The Canaanites, the cup of whose iniquity was full, had been given over to destruction for their wickedness (Deut. 9:3-5). And David, as a faithful man, and anointed King of Israel (though not yet crowned), was only carrying out God's will in every act in this direction.

Question David lied when he told King Achish he had been against the South of Judah (1 Sam. 27:10); in what Jonathon was to say to Saul - (1 Sam. 20:5-6) - and in what he said when he called on Abimelech when fleeing from Saul? (1 Sam. 21:1-2). Can a book be inspired that tells us he did nothing but what was right except in a particularly flagrant case?

Answer The narrative does not commend David's individual infirmities. It records them without colour or extenuation: and tells us of David's own self abasement on account of them (Psalm 38:4-18; 65:3). The statement to which they are supposed to be in contradiction (viz., that "he did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything He had commanded him, all the days of his life") must be taken in the wide sense of the narrative, which describes the character of his reign, and the attitude of David towards the express commandments of Yahweh. Judged in this way, the statement is absolutely correct, that all that God commanded David, David did, and turned not aside from any such thing, all the days of his life, with the single exception specified: which was in contrast to Saul, that went before him, and the kings that came after. The incidents referred to in the question all happened when he was young, before his reign began, and are lamented by David as "the sins of my youth" which he prays the Lord to forget. (Psalm 25:7).

Question Another command says: "The King shall not multiply wives unto himself", whereas David had four: how can a narrative be inspired which says he "turned not aside from anything commanded only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite"?

Answer The command not to "multiply wives" is too indefinite to make the basis of an objection. It might mean not to have a great many, as Solomon afterwards had. If this was the meaning, David did not offend in having four. Although one wife was the original appointment, it is evident that a departure from this to a certain extent was allowed in the times in question (of which both Abraham and Jacob themselves are examples). The nature of the times as regards sparseness of population and the crudeness of social arrangements may probably have had something to do with this liberty. Whatever the reason may have been it is evident that David was not departing from what was concurred in as right, in having four wives; and that therefore there is nothing in his act inconsistent with the statement that all the days of his life, he did what was right in the sight of the Lord.

(to be continued)

A BIBLE CLASS

"Be not highminded, but fear"

Romans 11:20

Paul here speaks to his Gentile brethren at Rome, concerning their relationship to the Jews - those first offered the hope of eternal life. He refers to Israel as the original branches which because of unbelief were broken off, allowing the Gentiles to be grafted in:

"And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:"

Romans 11:17-20.

Some of the Roman brethren may have thought themselves superior to the Jews who had spurned the Lord Jesus as the Son of God, thus losing their hope of life. Paul explained that God's grace was extended to any - Jew or Gentile, who would grasp the gospel message through a confessed belief in the Lord Jesus Christ:

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:"

Romans 11:25-26

He had reminded them earlier of what defined a Jew according to the Spirit:

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Romans 2:28-29.

No flesh may glory before God and a true Jew is one circumcised not after the manner prescribed by Law, but as the Spirit dictates - a heart endeavoring to cut off all fleshly impulses.

As the apostle to the Gentiles, Paul's work was to bring any who might hear and fear to the hope of Israel. This meant first perceiving God's special relationship with Israel, and the resulting

blessing now extended to any desiring to be in spirit, a Jew. Our verse, "Be not highminded but fear", warns of how fleshly pride can rear up and if not subdued, eventually rob one of life eternal:

"For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."
Romans 11:21-22.

God knows man's natural inclinations, and that a Gentile brought into the hope of Israel could feel superior towards those who had lost this same hope through unbelief. Therefore, Paul under God's hand instructed that they "Be not highminded but fear".

An example of highmindedness can be seen in Paul's epistle to Timothy:

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;"

I Timothy 6:17.

The rich may become highminded, feeling their wealth an achievement that sets them above others, unless there is spiritual understanding and restraint which brings forth gratitude and generosity. The Lord Jesus also warned of highmindedness as He addressed the Pharisees, "certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." This attitude was targeted by Jesus as He spoke through the parable of the Pharisee and the publican:

"Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying God be merciful to me a sinner.

I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Luke 18:10-14.

The Pharisee considering himself righteous, looked on the publican in contempt, displaying pride and highmindedness. He thought being a son of Abraham entitled him to the hope of Israel, irrespective of his behavior. The publican on the contrary would not so much as raise his eyes heavenward, feeling himself unworthy of God's forgiveness, leaving him a sinner. These two men were used by Jesus in His teaching as examples of pride and humility. The publicans were Jews used by the Romans to collect taxes from Israel and were hated by other Jews. Matthew, one of the twelve apostles, was a publican called by Jesus:

"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

And he left all, rose up, and followed him."

Luke 5:27-28.

The other apostles could have looked down on Matthew (Levi), but the spirit of the Truth counteracted these fleshly feelings, ever reminding not to be highminded but fear.

This is also a warning that we should be ever aware of the Truth as both a wondrous privilege and a great responsibility, and in gratitude should display a humble spirit in the fear of God:

"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."

II Cor. 10:12.

We have but one perfect standard with which to compare ourselves - the Lord Jesus Christ, who in humility and godly fear submitted to the will of His Father. As we honestly examine ourselves, we realize how far we fall short and need to apply the Spirit's counsel to be not highminded but fear.

M.C.S.

**AN EDITORIAL FROM AUSTRALIA
(WITH REFERENCE TO SHIELD) (Dec 1993)**

"We have met Unity Basis brethren who agree with the point of view we are presenting, but say we should do it from within the Unity Basis. It would be the easy way out for us to accept this argument, enter the Unity Basis, and then brazenly say our beliefs are a correct definition of what it means. We believe such a course of action would not be right, and would inevitably result in pressure for us to cease disseminating our point of view. We believe it is vital that what we consider to be the truth should continue to be propagated vigorously in print.

We have heard of arranging brethren of Unity Basis ecclesias who have cancelled their subscriptions to the Christadelphian and Testimony magazines because they do not approve of the doctrine they contain. That is, they believe the doctrine is wrong. If this is the case, and we agree that it is, it would seem that these brethren are neglecting their obligation to oppose that wrong doctrine. Their assumption seems to be that God will turn a blind eye to Christadelphian errors, especially those of the pioneers, and of editors of the Christadelphian. They also assume that those who turn a blind eye to the wrong doctrine are doing the right and brotherly thing and will be approved for their refusal to vigorously and openly contend for the truth. Thus, many Shield brethren publicly accept what they privately deplore. The acceptance of the Unity Basis compromised many brethren who did not like the BASF, but they accepted majority rule, and did not oppose it for fear of being accused of trouble-making, and of perhaps being disfellowshipped. This is directly at odds with the example of Jesus and Paul. We believe that God wants truth told "in the Truth", and true doctrine taught.

Many brethren are looking for the spiritual leadership that they are not receiving from the elected leaders of their ecclesias, nor from the ACC. We intend to continue our policy of constructive criticism of the defects in official doctrines. We will also strive to faithfully preserve the many undisputed truths which the brotherhood also teaches.

As Christadelphians ("brethren of Christ"), we happily welcome in fellowship all our brothers and sisters in Christ, and we are happy to meet elsewhere with all who claim that name, even if they accept the Unity Basis. We will not hold that against them, but will try to help them."

The Remnant's comments on the above

It is obvious from the Australian remarks, that there is an unhappy situation there, amongst those who were supposed to have been brought together as a result of the Carter-Cooper agreement. The complaint of those inclined to Shield beliefs is as follows:-

"The following statement is found in the ACC Executive minutes of 19-8-1991, in item 3 of the Correspondence Outwards:-

"According to the ACC Constitution any Ecclesia who maintains its acceptance of the Unity Basis is eligible for affiliation with the ACC. The ACC is not in a position, and nor do we believe it ever should be, to judge an Ecclesia, whether affiliated or not, who maintains acceptance of the Unity Basis. Such decisions rightly belong with individual ecclesias, and the Ecclesial Guide clearly recognises and allows for differences of outlook between ecclesias."

"The ACC allowed the setting up of this sub-committee, contrary to its assurance that no resolutions would be put to the 1990 Lakemba meeting, and then allowed the resulting sub-committee to "sit in judgment" on an ecclesia which has always "maintained its acceptance of the Unity Basis"! This shows that despite all assurances to the contrary, an acceptance of the Unity Basis is not enough, and those who accept it must also be prepared to admit the sole legitimacy of the Logos interpretation of it. Has this sub-committee assumed the role of an Inquisitorial body, seeing treachery and treason in any ecclesia which does not submit to its demands? The quoting of Prov. 6:16-19 against Beverley Hills is unfounded and amounts to slander - - - . Do these brethren and sisters have "lying tongues"? Bro. Spongberg is so open about his beliefs that he wrote a book about them, so what needs to be "clarified"? - - - . They have not deliberately set out to cause trouble between brethren, so they should not be accused of "sowing discord among brethren". They will allow brethren from "the ten" to fellowship with them. They are involved in controversy, but so what? John Thomas was always involved in controversy, and Jesus Christ certainly was.

Will the effect of this Sydney sub-committee be that any ecclesia which does not endorse their suggestion be accused of "sowing discord among brethren"? Is anybody who does not agree with the sub-committee to be threatened with banishment from the brotherhood? Will ecclesias outside NSW be expected to endorse the NSW ecclesial decision about this matter when they had no say in appointing the committee and were not consulted about the discussion paper? Will the NSW decision be presented to them as a fait accompli, and will their endorsement of it be expected if they too are not to be accused of "creating discord among brethren"?

The Remnant believes that in quoting the above remarks, some evidence is furnished to our readers of the serious situation in Australia. Where is fellowship, except in a nominal sense, in the ecclesial situation as indicated?

As a result of the Carter-Cooper discussions for re-union in Australia (1958) a report leading up to that event said:-

“--- Following constant labour extending over a period of almost two years, a clear basis for ecclesial unity has now been formulated. This basis --- has received the support of the great majority of the ecclesias and numerically almost the whole of the total membership comprising the Shield and Victorian group ecclesias, consents having been communicated to us in writing.”

But were the details and acceptances of the Unity Agreement clear to all parties? To have acceptance, with misunderstandings, is superficial. There may be considerable increase of members in such an amalgamation; but where is there any real worth in it, if the disunity which existed before the re-union is still there after the two parties come together?

Such sad situations occur because there is failure in the upholding of the doctrine of fellowship, through eagerness to increase numerically.

‘Old Paths’ had this charge to make about the situation:-

“When the Unity agreement (the accepted basis of Reunion between the Central and Shield Ecclesias in Australia) was presented and adopted, those who opposed it (such as the now “Old Paths” group of Ecclesias) claimed that it allowed Brethren and Sisters who held error to be accommodated within Reunion.

Until recent times any thought that such accommodation was possible was strenuously denied by the “Central” group of Ecclesias, and the reply by several “Central” Ecclesias to the ACC assessment (which reject it as “misleading, scripturally indefensible and potentially divisive”) had the capacity to end the matter once and for all. It is now evident that many of the matters detailed in the ACC document were an accurate assessment of the situation, as evidenced by the more recently published “1958 Revisited”, and that in fact there are those in the “Central” Fellowship who believe that the Unity Agreement did and does provide room for their erroneous views.

As the Unity Agreement removed the former “Central” practice of automatic withdrawal from an ecclesia which retained an errorist it does not provide sufficient basis for inter-ecclesial action to ensure the removal from fellowship of those who clearly hold error.”

The Old Paths were closely involved at the time so their evidence is not to be dismissed.

The Remnant brings these things to your attention to show that where there is failure in the Doctrine of Fellowship, fellowship is lost in the chaos of everyone doing (or believing) in “that which (is) right in his own eyes”.

The Pioneers would have been horrified at such a situation, with a lack of clear-cut demarkation.

Signs of His Coming and of the End of the World

"BE THOU PREPARED AND PREPARE FOR THYSELF"

(Ezekiel 38:7)

A Slumbering Giant · Dr. Thomas 1858)

"The St. Petersburg Gazette has lately been publishing a series of articles upon "The Mission of Russia", in reply to some of the English journals, which had accused that power of a design to assume an aggressive attitude in Asia. It sums up its arguments as follows:

"Just as the mission of civilising Southern Asia belongs to England, so that of civilizing Northern Asia belongs to Russia. Siberia (Tob) is a slumbering Giant, whose strength will not be manifest till he awakes. Throughout the southern frontier of Siberia, the Ural Mountains, and as far as the Pacific Ocean, we require roads to enable us to trade with Southern Asia. The exchange of the products of the North with the riches of the South, and that animation which flows from trade and manufactures, will give life, movement, and a greater population to the north. This is no castle in the air, no plan conceived with any selfish object; it is but a demand for the moral development of civilization itself. To attempt to stay that development would, indeed, be to form an aggressive power in Asia; and any such aggression would end in the destruction of the Power attempting it, and not in that of Russia. Russia will no more be vanquished by England on this ground than she was in the last European war."

"This is true. When the last struggle comes, the power of England in Asia will to a certain point recede before that of Russia. But though Russia's power will not be destroyed by England, neither will England's be by Russia. When the Giant Tob now slumbering shall awake a stone from David's sling will smite him. The lust of riches and power will wake him up; England will defy him; but the Lord of Hosts alone will lay him in the dust."

The Remnant's Comments 1994

It was on the Steppes of Russia that the huge Nazi war machine received its mortal blow in the 1939-1945 war. As forecast in the quotation used by Dr. Thomas in 1858 the "aggressive power" that was making its thrust towards Asia, ended "in the destruction of the

Power attempting it, and not in that of Russia". Germany came up against the buffers at Stalingrad. Now this Giant appears to be slumbering again. But it is interesting to note what a former British entitled lady spy recently had to say. One who was known as the "queen of spies" before she retired, and had served in Moscow, the Far East, and Africa:-

"We are looking at a country which still has the largest army in Europe, which has got a lot of new research and development, which although it is destroying obsolete weapons is replacing them by new ones all the time. What we have to find out are the intentions of the Russians. They have still got all those missiles pointing straight at this country. That has not been changed yet."

Dr. Thomas (in 1858) gauged the situation very well.

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

Opportunity to witness to God's Truth through inquiry and correspondence provides a work for which we thank our Father. Guidance and His blessing are earnestly sought in this work, believing that as bread cast upon the water, it may return after many days.

J.A.DeF.

MANCHESTER, *Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.*

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

Letters we receive from various parts of the world reveal an ongoing tragic situation of disunity, in those who describe themselves as the ecclesias to show their distinction from "the churches". How sad it is that people who claim they are brethren are unable to have the unity of brethren.