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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"

"AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD"

"THE TITLES OF THE PSALMS"

"THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST"

"A BIBLE CLASS"

**"I WILL BE SANCTIFIED IN THEM THAT
COME NIGH ME"**

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

"NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS"

All Communications

W. G. Butterfield,
72 Thames Drive,
Biddulph,
Staffs.
ST8 7JF

J. A. DeFries,
2335 Route 39
Forestville,
New York 14062
U.S.A.

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD
"IN THAT DAY"

This week we have read God's words to Judah and Jerusalem through His prophet Zechariah. He spoke to those who had returned to the city after being seventy years captive in Babylon, just as God had earlier promised:

"... after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place." Jeremiah 29:10.

Many Israelites, captive for so long in that land—by then known as Persia—did return:

"... in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia. . .the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus. . .that he made a proclamation. . .saying,
The LORD God of heaven hath. . .charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem. . . .
Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem. . .and build the house of the LORD God of Israel (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem." Ezra 1:1-3.

This great king, acknowledging the power and glory of Israel's God, released and helped this people. With Zerubbabel as governor and Jeshua as high priest, nearly fifty thousand of Judah returned, and two years later began the rebuilding of the temple which Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed. Soon adversaries arose and stopped this work by threats and false reports to the king of Persia. This vital labor ceased for fourteen years until the Almighty sent His prophets, stirring up those in Jerusalem to resume the rebuilding:

"Then the prophets, Haggai. . .and Zechariah. . .prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem. . . .
Then rose up Zerubbabel. . .and Jeshua. . .and began to build the house of God. . .and with them were the prophets of God helping them." Ezra 5:1-2.

What support God provided as these men encouraged and urged His people to move ahead!

We are reading today God's words which brought forth the rebuilding and helped put away fears and doubts. The task was still not without the trials of adversaries and fear, but as His prophets

heartened the workers, the rebuilding of the temple continued to completion four years later. Let us give heed to God's word through Zechariah which stirred up these people to get back to their divinely appointed work. Outstanding in his words of encouragement was the frequent reference to "THE DAY OF THE LORD", repeatedly bringing our brethren's minds to looking ahead beyond their current labor to the promise from their merciful God. We have an example, inspiring to ourselves also:

"... for the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle. Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow. . . ." Zechariah 10:3-4.

How did the Almighty visit His people? He brought them out of captivity to their own city of peace, and gave them the privilege and responsibility of rebuilding His own house. He further promised that out of Judah would come the "corner stone" (I Peter 2:6), the nail (Isaiah 22:22-23), and the battle bow (Revelation 6:2) - all speaking of the promised heir and builder to come, Jesus Christ, God's Son, who is to return in the ordained time when:

"... I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the LORD their God, and will hear them." Zechariah 10:6.

Here is a promise for then and an enlarging promise of a day yet to come—the "day of the LORD"—when Jerusalem will be the earth's capital from which His law shall go forth to all mankind. Zechariah further spoke of Jerusalem:

"Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem." Zechariah 12:2.

Before Judah and Jerusalem will become the center of the world, many enemies will lay siege seeking her downfall. But the LORD defending His city reveals:

"... in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." Zechariah 12:3.

Many nations over the centuries have burdened themselves with Jerusalem: Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome; and in modern days, the Arabs, Russia, and Britain—and their allies. Not one has prevailed, none will prevail in that great final “day of the LORD” when Jesus as King and His Saints with Him rule from that city of peace, fulfilling the ancient and enduring promises to Abraham and David.

To further strengthen the Jews’ work in the desolation of Zechariah’s time, God continued to speak through His prophet:

“In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.” Zechariah 12:8.

How unlikely this would seem to those “feeble Jews” in Jerusalem hindered in the building, yet God’s word promised and has never failed. Israel was helped then, but of that future “day” the prophecy revealed:

“In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem. . . .” Zechariah 12:11.

Why such sorrow in a time of deliverance? Verse 10 reveals how Israel as a nation will mourn as God spoke:

“. . . I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

Zechariah 12:10.

In their grief and shame many shall seek God’s forgiveness for crucifying His Son, and will then acknowledge Him as their King and Messiah. Zechariah reveals the Almighty’s mercy to those who mourn for the One “whom they have pierced”:

“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.” Zechariah 13:1.

Yet in His promised and perfect justice, Israel as a people will not be unpunished for their repudiation of God’s Son:

“And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.

And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.”
Zechariah 13:8-9.

This people is to face much tribulation in that divine refining process, yet in that day, a portion again will have become His people—righteous, defended, and blessed—as Zechariah foretold:

“Behold, the day of the LORD cometh. . . .
Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.”
Zechariah 14:1,3.

How far removed that day of the LORD must have seemed to those strengthless few in Jerusalem, encompassed by bitter adversaries who halted the work in their enmity. We can picture that desolation in Jerusalem, and that once glorious temple a heap of stones—overgrown, weathered, and forsaken. Yet the Almighty through Zechariah and Haggai again and again renewed His people in the hope given through His promises. He reassured them, and Brethren and Sisters, He reconfirms to us today, “the day of the LORD cometh”. It is true, we do believe the day of the LORD comes. We look and we watch for it. But is it vibrantly real, Brethren and Sisters, enough alive to make us devote our lives to Him and to the building of His house in our probation? Does the hope live and sustain us in resolute faith, and do our works manifest it?

The prophet opens for us the blessings of that promised time:

“And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; . . .
And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.”
Zechariah 14:8-9.

The greater Son of David will be crowned king, not only of Jerusalem, not only of Israel, but over all the earth’s people who will be caused to recognize Him and serve Him in obedience and reverence. There will be “one LORD” instead of the many “lords” worshipped under the names of Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and other such gods.

Further, the prophet reveals in that day:

"... it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles." Zechariah 14:16.

It may be that some in Jerusalem would feel this to be highly impossible as they surveyed the city's desolation. Yet, if they pondered the great things which God had already accomplished for them since Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of the city and their sorrowful march into captivity, they would find hope. For after years of often cruel bondage under Babylonian rule, the Almighty had caused their oppressors to be overthrown by the power of Persia. Then as the appointed seventy years drew to an end, their God moved the great Cyrus, king of Persia, to release His people. Cyrus, responding to Israel's God, commissioned Zerubbabel and Jeshua to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, even returning its holy vessels, looted by Nebuchadnezzar, to their appointed place. Then with the Lord's prophets helping them, the people rose above their own limited thinking and began again the work of His house with zeal. As a result we are shown:

"... this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.

And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of the house of God with joy." Ezra 6:15-16.

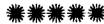
Four years after God had sent His prophets to help Israel, the house was finished and a great passover kept (verse 19). What a glorious rejoicing for his people as they came to His house to keep the ordained feasts, and as they looked with hope to the promised "day of the LORD" which is yet to come, when He will bring about His purpose with this earth!

As we are able to enter into the minds and hearts of our brethren in Jerusalem in the day of their rejoicing, how we too are moved to look beyond our daily tasks and trials to the bright and glorious hope of His day soon to come when all the vessels in the house of the LORD shall be "like bowls before the altar", full of love, involvement, and offering in His work, all reflecting "HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD" (Zechariah 14:20-21). Cannot this vision take hold and sustain us through His great and merciful power? Indeed can we be taken in spirit to the glory of that time when we are no longer in bondage and trial? Paul speaks of those who are now so engaged, separated from this world:

“. . . ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”
Ephesians 2:19-22.

This is the ultimate blessing—“the day of the LORD”—toward which all our present lives are being ordered in our Father’s love and mercy.

J.A.DeF.



THE TITLES OF THE PSALMS

We have again been reading the Psalms and are immediately shown through the titles a unique feature found only in these pruned songs. The title often reveals the spirit of the psalm, adding further insight into the mind of David, a man who so pleased the Almighty that he was called, “a man after God’s own heart.” Let us examine a few of these titled psalms to gain the help they provide:

Psalm 8 is entitled, “To the chief Musician (the one who overcomes) upon Gittith (the winepress of the final harvest of joy). A Psalm of David”. This title focuses the mind upon the ultimate harvest promised at the end of God’s purpose when the responsible, both living and dead, will be gathered to the judgment seat of Christ where the faithful will receive their just rewards. As David considered his place in God’s vast creation with this end in mind, he said with awe and humility:

“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;
What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”
Psalm 8:3-4.

Indeed, what is man that he should be so blessed, created in the image of the Father for the particular purpose of obeying and so glorifying Him—a wondrous opportunity offered by a merciful God. In a general sense, man does not value the goodness God has provided—the stewardship of His creation and dominion over all

it contains, but the spirit man must be aware of these daily blessings to grow in appreciation and show forth in his living a spirit of: "O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" (verse 1). Though few today seek Him, we know the day will come when all eyes will be turned toward God, for those who have endured with faith the long trials and final pressure of God's winepress, resulting in the sweet wine of His harvest—the final harvest of joy for those found approved.

Psalm 6 helps us to perceive a fuller knowledge of God's care for His people as it is entitled, "To the chief Musician (the one that overcomes) on Neginoth (the harp of praise) upon Sheminith (with the help of God's abundance) a Psalm of David". This title speaks particularly of God's deliverance granted in full measure to those who call upon Him as did David in this frailty:

"O LORD, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.
Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed." Psalm 6:1-2.

David knew only too well that the weakness of his flesh with its inherent tendency to sin was unacceptable and greatly desired God's abundant help and spiritual strengthening to overcome its waywardness:

"Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake." Psalm 6:4.

The use of "return" here gives the thought of desiring once again God's favor, perhaps after a period of weakness or failure which alienates from Him. Thus David beseeches the Almighty to turn again to him, seeking the forgiveness and mercy which God in His kindness extends to those who reach out to Him with a truly repentant heart:

"The LORD hath heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer." Psalm 6:9.

Because his prayer has been heard, David gives praise to God on "Neginoth" the harp of praise. Like a musical instrument which is taken up into the hands and with effort and care comes forth a pleasing melody, so too is the work of probation which must be labored at with diligence in order to please the Creator.

Psalm 3 is another pruned song entitled, "A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son". We may recall how this rebellious son took his father's position and wives, setting himself up as king in opposition to David. Indeed a sore trial for a father whose love was rewarded with treachery, finally forcing him to flee

in order to save Jerusalem from an attack by Absalom and his followers. That this psalm is particularly identified by its title helps us to understand the pain and suffering David therein expressed as a father of an unloving son:

“And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom; make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.” II Samuel 15:14.

In this psalm David pours out his supplication before God, seeking His help and deliverance after losing his throne, home and the loyalty of his favored son:

“LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me.
I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about.
Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.” Psalm 3:1,6-7.

God heard his prayer, bringing Absalom and his followers to defeat, and restoring David to his throne at Jerusalem. Though the victory was an answer to prayer, David nonetheless was filled with a father's sorrow at the news of Absalom's death.

These three particular titled psalms illustrate how God works with those called to partake of His mercy, teaching that His care is close at hand for those who cry out for His help and that He desires His people to give praise and glory to Him now as a foretaste of that wondrous all-encompassing praise which will fill the whole earth when His kingdom is triumphant in the earth.

M.C.S.

THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST

A Question to a Christadelphian Magazine

"I have always considered it a fundamental Bible teaching that Jesus' sacrifice was necessary for himself as well as for sinful men and women. A phrase in the --- editorial saying that it was not necessary for Jesus to offer for himself caused me to wonder if my longstanding belief was being challenged ---."

An extract from this magazine in reply to the above

"--- Through man's disobedience, the whole world travails under the burden of sin and death: "The scripture hath concluded all under sin" (Gal.3:22) If man had been able to produce his own saviour, there would have been no need for God to send forth His Son. But, in order to provide an effective covering for man's sins, Jesus was "made of a woman, made under the law" (Gal.4:4), as well as being also "that holy thing --- the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

The consequence of his human parentage was that Jesus fully shared our fleshly weaknesses. As a son of sinful Adam, he was begotten after Adam's own likeness (Gen.5:3), and born into a sinful world with all the problems promised to Adam as a direct result of his sin. Physically Jesus was like all others who have ever lived: he was mortal and constantly susceptible to temptations to sin. But in stressing these similarities we have to recognise that Jesus was also different from us. He successfully resisted every temptation, and thus never sinned. The word of God was so much a part of his daily life that it is true to say he was "the word made flesh" (John 1:14).

The sole purpose of his mission was to "save his people from their sins" (Matt.1:21). All of his life was directed to this end. It was God's will for him, and Jesus made that will his own (Luke 22:42). The extent of the sacrifice made by the Father and the Son is indicated when we recognise that Jesus himself had no sins from which to be saved. Our problem is twofold: we bear a dying and sin-prone nature, and we have transgressed against God's commands, falling short of His glory. Jesus was affected by the first of these, but not by the second. He was a dying creature, but he had done "no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Pet.2:22).

This difference between ourselves and our saviour is important. If he had not been sinless, he could not have been the sin-covering we need. If it had not been possible for him to sin, he could not have conquered sin in order to be our saviour!- - -

Perhaps the difficulty with the phrase, "he did not have to make an offering for the nature he received at birth" (Dec. 1993, page 467), arises because, for the purposes of the exposition about baptism, the Lord's moral and physical needs were being separated. In its context, the phrase was referring to Jesus not having any

moral imperfection for which an offering had to be made. Atonement always implies the covering of a moral impurity, just as alienation is moral and not physical: we are "alienated from God - - - by wicked works" (Col.1:21). As we have considered, Jesus had no sins which needed covering.

He bore no moral guilt, and was not morally unclean as we are when we sin. He was not alienated from the Father, though his nature meant he was physically separated from Him. In order to enjoy full fellowship with his Father, Jesus' mortal nature needed changing: He needed saving "out of death" (Hebrews 5:7, R.V. margin). As he was specifically sent by God to be our Saviour, the only way this could be accomplished was by his obedient sacrifice. The Father's response was to raise him from the dead and glorify him, and he became the firstfruits of them that slept. By these means, the Lord benefited from his own sacrifice."

The Remnant's Comments on the Above

We believe it is unwise for the above exponent to attempt to divide Jesus from His nature. The human, flesh nature, of Jesus WAS Jesus; and His Spirit thinking (and His struggle with the mind of the flesh), therein, WAS Jesus. We believe that it was necessary for Jesus to offer for Himself, because of this. That is why He died upon the cross. His sacrifice thereon condemned Himself in which the temptations to sin worked, as also all flesh in a general condemnation. "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13).

The significance also of the offering at His birth (under the law of Moses "that sin - - - might become exceeding sinful"), should not be overlooked. As the following shows:-

"- - - they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord: (as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons"
(Luke 2:22-24).

It was very necessary that an offering should be made for Jesus at His birth, and this was performed. This observance of the law of course was a typification. But as Jesus was the end result, for He WAS the offering, the typification showed He also needed the offering, that is, "he needed to offer for himself."

Furthermore the following should also be considered:-

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."

(Romans 8:3).

Jesus therefore condemned the flesh, and as He was flesh, He therefore condemned Himself in Whom struggled the mind of the flesh with the mind of the Spirit. He needed His own sacrifice to save Himself from this mortal condition wherein was the working of sin, though He triumphed over it by the cross and could say as He expired, "It is finished" (John 19:30).

So Jesus has become one who can have compassion upon His people, because He remembers the weakness of his own nature in the days of His probation:-

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

(Hebrews 4:15-16)



A BIBLE CLASS
"Undertake For Me"
(Isaiah 38:14)

These words we are considering were spoken by Hezekiah, king of Judah, who at a relatively young age was stricken with an illness that brought him close to death. At the same time, Sennacherib, king of Assyria was close by, threatening to take Jerusalem. In the midst of all this trouble, the prophet Isaiah brought God's word to the king: "Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live." (Isaiah 38:1). In grief, Hezekiah pleaded with God saying:

"... Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O LORD, I am oppressed; undertake for me." Isaiah 38:3,14.

In the midst of his oppression and grief Hezekiah showed a trust in the power of God when he asked, "undertake for me". The word "undertake" comes from a prime root meaning to braid or

become a surety. Hezekiah was asking God to be his surety or guarantee—the only sure strength he knew that could deliver him both from his illness and from the threat of Sennacherib's invasion.

David too, believed in the strength of God's power to be exercised on behalf of His children when he prayed:

"Be surety for thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me."
Psalm 119:22.

Hezekiah was asking for this same power to work on his behalf as he prayed God to "undertake" for him—to braid or intermix his own failing state with that of God's, to heal him and save Jerusalem and Judah. God answered through the prophet Isaiah:

"Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, 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: and I will defend this city." Isaiah 38:5-6.

At the same time Hezekiah's prayer was heard, Sennacherib and Assyria's destiny was sealed, as God through His prophet foretold:

"... concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it.

By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant Dvid's sake.

And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead."

II Kings 19:32-37.

Sennacherib was killed by his own sons, for his "god" Nisroch was powerless to do for him as God did for His servant Hezekiah. Another example of God's undertaking is seen as Peter,

imprisoned by Herod in order to curry favor with those Jews persecuting the followers of Christ, experienced the surety of God's deliverance:

"And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.

And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him. Cast thy garment about these, and follow me.

And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.

When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews." Acts 12:7-11.

Just as Peter was so remarkably delivered by God's messenger, stirring him in gratitude to exclaim, ". . . Now I know of a surety", so too came reassurance to Hezekiah as God's answer of life and hope was received moving him to vow:

"What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul." Isaiah 38:15.

To "go softly" is to walk carefully in humbleness, showing to God the reverence and respect due unto his name. With his illness cured, fifteen years added onto his life and the Assyrian threat vanquished by the power of God alone, how grateful Hezekiah would feel for this sure answer to prayer, working in him a resolve to "go softly" for this great mercy granted. What a marvellously uplifting experience it must have been to know the hand of God applied so dramatically in his living. Though our circumstances do not measure in comparison we too, must as Hezekiah, be quick to seek in faith His help and strength and when we are oppressed to cry out to God, "undertake for me".

M.C.S.

**"I WILL BE SANCTIFIED IN THEM THAT COME
NIGH ME"
(Leviticus 10:3)**

In considering this subject, It is helpful to review the circumstances in context. In Leviticus 8, we have seen the consecration of Aaron, of his sons, and of the tabernacle:

"... Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle... he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, ... to sanctify him. ... Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood ... and sprinkled it upon Aaron, ... and upon his sons ... and sanctified Aaron, ... and his sons. ..."
Lev. 8:10,12,30.

Leviticus 9, tells us of the dedication of the tabernacle. Also Aaron and his sons began their ministry. As they did this divinely-appointed work:

"... the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces." Leviticus 9:23-24.

They shouted for joy, perceiving God's glory in the consuming of the sacrifices offered by His sanctified priests, in His sanctified house. They fell on their faces in reverence and godly fear.

It would appear that immediately after this awesome display of divine glory and holiness, Nadab and Abihu, Aaron's sons, took upon themselves to offer incense upon strange fire before the Lord. Nadab being Aaron's firstborn, would be next in line for the office of high priest, and Abihu was the next oldest. In offering incense with "strange fire" (other than from the brazen altar which God had ordained), they did that:

"... which he (God) commanded them not."

Leviticus 10:1.

Resulting from this disregard of the Almighty's command:

"... there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them. ..."
Verse 2.

This may seem a drastic punishment, but directed by the Almighty, it was right and just, revealing to Israel God's anger. It spoke also to Aaron who would be deeply disturbed by the disaster. Moses, who would know Aaron's mind, spoke:

“ . . . This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified.”
Leviticus 10:3.

The eternal God required that He be, in Israel’s mind, ever made holy, hallowed by them that came near Him. Nadab and Abihu came near, but with “strange fire”, failing to sanctify Him and thus they died before the Lord. There was the danger that Aaron, moved by grief, could not perform his office as high priest in a way to sanctify the Lord, and so Moses spoke to him:

“ . . . And Aaron held his peace.”
Leviticus 10:3.

He accepted Moses’ help rather than yield to his personal grief and shock.

We remember an occasion when Aaron and Moses failed to sanctify God at the rock; as, provoked by Israel, they said:

“ . . . must we fetch you water out of this rock?”
Numbers 20:10.

God rebuked them:

“ . . . Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land. . . .”
Numbers 20:12.

Failure to sanctify, hallow the Almighty, can only result in difficulty and shame.

How does this apply to us today, Brethren and Sisters? Perhaps the words of Jesus in reply to His disciples’ plea, “teach us to pray”, help:

“ . . . When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name. . . .”
Luke 11:2.

Jesus taught that regarding God as holy—even beyond our ability to perceive—was the first requirement of one’s seeking Him in prayer. Indeed he is holier than mere man can grasp. With this in mind, should we not examine all our ways, but especially those in which we “approach unto” Him? We think of Moses’ careful preparation, his care that God be sanctified. What of our own care as we come nigh unto him—our minds, our appearance, our attitudes? What care is required in all the arrangements for His service. Like Aaron, we can fail to honor our Father if our own emotions, desires, or lack of awareness and perception are allowed to interfere

with our serving Him. Is what He has ordained as our means of coming nigh unto Him, our offering, the most important part of our living? Have we put His work first in our thinking, our doing? Are we sensitive to His presence, the holiness of His name, the privilege of approaching, so that we do so with fear lest we offend? There was nothing casual in what Jesus spoke to His disciples. Every word of His teaching regarding prayer conveyed a message, but first was—"Hallowed be thy name".

We have seen in our consideration that when Aaron had finished the work of officiating in the holy place, he did not eat of the sin offering in the holy place which was the priest's part. He explained to Moses who had questioned:

"... such things have befallen me: and if I had eaten the sin offering today, should it have been accepted in the sight of the LORD?"
Leviticus 10:19.

Aaron's care was to faithfully come nigh the Almighty, offering for the people. However, because of his grief, shame and sense of responsibility for his sons, he could not bring himself to partake of that sin offering lest he himself might fail to sanctify his Creator. What keen awareness of God's holiness and man's very great lack!

Let us then, as we come nigh unto our Father, in prayer, in the work of His house, in the service each week, keep in the forefront of our minds—"sanctify Him", lest we fail to please him, and rather bring shame and sorrow.

J.A.DeF.

Signs of His coming and of the End of the World

"For it shall be, that, as a wandering bird cast out of the nest, so the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon. Take counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide the outcasts; bera y not him that wandereth."
(Isaiah 16:2-3).

But the latter day Moab, that has been close to the Jewish people of Israel, even as Moab of old, failed in these very things.

In 1939 Hitler indicated that there would be war, and that the Jews in Europe would be exterminated. But what did the proclaimed protector of the Jews do? The British Government announced in 1939, in what was called a White Paper, that Jewish immigration into Palestine, over which it had control, would be restricted to 10,000 a year, and there would also be restrictions on the Jews buying land there. Later in 1940, possibly to underline the British determination to enforce the control, several thousand Jews who had escaped from Rumania to Palestine were deported. Seventeen hundred were placed on the steamer "Patria" which tragically sank in the port of Haifa, with the loss of many lives. An example of the desperate situation of Jews fleeing from Nazi persecution was when a ship arrived in Cuba in 1939 with 1000 Jews aboard, but they were not permitted to disembark, and no country would accept them. They had eventually to return to Europe and few survived the war.

If only the latter day Moab had responded to the great need of the Jewish people, and had 'hidden those outcasts'; then many Jewish lives would have been spared. Instead six million Jews were killed by the Nazis during the war. Now, of course, the German leadership was to blame, but British policy was also greatly at fault, and this was later compounded by a continuing restrictiveness after the war, which brought about a Jewish underground resistance movement in Palestine. For example, from 1945 onwards, as Jews from European displaced persons camps, attempted to reach Israel, the British intercepted them and interned them in special camps in Cyprus. In 1947 two ships arriving at Palestine were stopped; one of them, the "Exodus 1947" was seized, causing several Jewish deaths, and was forced to return to Germany. Finally in 1947 The United Nations recognised the problem of the Jewish survivors in Europe who had nowhere to go. The U.N.O. voted to withdraw the mandate given too the British over Palestine, and agreed to a plan dividing the country. Some of the land to be for Jews and some for Arabs, and Jerusalem to be an international city on its own.

The Arabs did not approve of this arrangement, and backed by the financial support of other Arab countries began to attack the

Jews, seeking to forcibly occupy as much territory as possible. The British governors of Palestine meanwhile were at best, neutral onlookers to the attacks. About that time another ship full of Jews endeavoured to escape to Palestine was driven away by the British. Yet Arabs were rising against Jews in Aden, (also under British rule) and a number of Jews were slain there. In Syria also, there was great Jewish suffering, with synagogues attacked and destroyed. Thousands of Jews fled Syria. But where could they go?

Then a miracle happened; as the British relinquished their rule over Palestine in 1948, the Jews who were surviving against all odds from the Arab attacks, proclaimed, under Ben Gurion, their autonomous and independent Jewish State. It was then immediately declared that Jews could freely come to the newly declared nation of Israel, and assurance was given that they would not have any restriction on their purchasing land there. One year later, Britain released the remaining 25,000 Jewish immigrants (from a total of over 50,000) being held in Cyprus. By that time there were one million Jews in Palestine, and their war of independence against the Arabs, and other attacking Arab nations, came to an end, with separate armistice agreements with the various neighbouring Arab countries. Four thousand Jewish soldiers and two thousand Jewish civilians had died in the conflict. But since then there has been a home for the fleeing Jew, not with Britain's blessing, but rather by Jewish endeavour and divine help.

What of Britain since that time? It has gone "down hill". There has been one monetary crisis after another, and "the empire on which the sun never set" has vanished.

Now in this year 1994, Britain's government, looking back to its past glories, is making this a year of celebration, 50 years after "D Day", when the greatest armada the world had ever known, of British, American and Canadian ships and troops, attacked Nazi Fortress Europe, which brought about the end of Hitler and his ilk. But is it proving to be a muted celebration. Soldiers still alive who were involved in the desperate fighting in Normandy and elsewhere in 1944 remember those times only too well, but with no desire to celebrate those awful events, which they still view with horror. Doubtless Britain's rulers have been taken aback by the criticism of so many that a celebration in 1994 is not appropriate. They were hoping it might bring cheer to a people downcast by severe economic troubles, with a very divided society, and a considerable degree of dishonesty and violence, that has been getting out of hand.

How significant is the prophecy concerning this latter day Moab.

“And it shall come to pass, when it is seen that Moab is weary on the high place, that he shall come to his sanctuary to pray; but he shall not prevail. This is the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning Moab since that time.”

(Isaiah 16:12-13)

“We have heard of the pride of Moab, he is very proud: even of his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath: but his lies shall not be so.”

(Isaiah 16:6)

These events are irrevocably leading to the final fulfilment of the prophecy:-

“Send ye the lamb to the ruler of the land from Sela to the wilderness, unto the mount of the daughter of Zion.”

(Isaiah 16:1)

“And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.”

(Isaiah 16:5)

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

Our annual Sunday School outing is planned, God willing, for Saturday August 13th.

Response to our March mailing inviting the general public to write for the Prophecy article was much greater than previously experienced. We are grateful for this encouragement and opportunity to witness to His word.

Supplications are made on behalf of those in illness and trial that the Almighty might heal and comfort as He knows best.

J.A.DeF.

MANCHESTER, *Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.*

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

We rejoice at the healing granted to the sick whom all have had much in mind.

We also hope shortly to resume our circulating the general public in our witnessing to the prophetic message.