

**JANUARY 1995**

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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"**

**"NOT WHAT I WILL"**

**"DR THOMAS ON SPIRITUALISM"**

**"FROM A LETTER RECEIVED BY THE REMNANT"**

**"A BIBLE CLASS"**

**"FOR THEY ARE NOT ALL ISRAEL WHICH  
ARE OF ISRAEL"**

**"DR THOMAS AND THE JEWISH BOY"**

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

**"NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS"**

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**AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD**  
**"LENT TO THE LORD"**

Today our reading in I Samuel takes us back over three thousand years to the time of Samuel's miraculous birth. It was a difficult period for Israel, this time of the judges. The people had turned from God to the worship of idols and as a result, the Almighty brought affliction and bondage upon them. When after much tribulation they cried to the Lord, He heard and sent "judges which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them" (Judges 2:16). He showed great mercy, only to have them return to their evil ways when the delivering judge had died. We read of this time:

"... the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision."  
I Samuel 3:1.

Precious involves being prized through being scarce, and therefore, much set by or valued by any who sincerely sought to be right in God's eyes. At this time in Israel's history, there were few who did so, and as a consequence, there was no clear communication from God as He withheld His guidance. Eli was priest and judge at that time; however, his evil sons as priests were without conscience, and he as their father did not condemn or remove them. Because of this, God, speaking of Eli, said:

"... I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not."  
I Samuel 3:13.

Eli had rebuked these sons:

"... Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them."  
I Samuel 2:25.

Clearly God had ordained punishment for these. The law was concise: "Honour thy father and thy mother..." (Exodus 20:12). Further, clear instruction was given through Moses regarding a rebellious son who:

"... will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them:  
Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, ...

And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; ... And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear." Deuteronomy 21:18-21.

Eli, the priest, did not restrain his sons, but rather permitted this evil to continue. We can see why the "word of the LORD was precious (scarce) in those days; there was no open vision." Because of God's displeasure with the priest and the people, four thousand men were lost in battle at the hands of the Philistines (See I Samuel 4:2). And so in defeat, the elders of Israel, seeking God's help, wrongly reasoned:

"... Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies." I Samuel 4:3.

How lacking in perception were these elders! The presence of the ark would be meaningless if God were not with His people. It was a dark period for Israel; the ark was taken, and many of Israel were slain, the two evil sons of Eli among them. Eli himself died as he heard these evil tidings. His daughter-in-law (Phinehas' wife) at that time brought forth a son, and because of this calamity, she named him:

"Ichabod, saying, the glory is departed from Israel: ... for the ark of God is taken." I Samuel 4:21-22.

These disasters came upon Israel because they failed to honor Him by obedience. Indeed, "the word of the LORD was precious in those days."

There were a few who listened, seeking the Lord and His word. Among these were Elkanah and Hannah, his wife, of whom we read:

"... this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts in Shiloh." I Samuel 1:3.

Hannah was barren, and for this she grieved greatly. Elkanah's concern for her sadness irked his other wife, Peninnah, who had given him children, so that she:

## THE REMNANT

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"... provoked (Hannah) sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb.  
And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat." I Samuel 1:6-7.

Year after year Hannah, still having no son, was agitated and deeply troubled. In her bitter affliction she "... prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore." What was her prayer?

"... she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou will indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, ... but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then will I give him unto the LORD all the days of his life..." I Samuel 1:11.

Here indeed was trust, dependence on God, and her solemn pledge. By way of answer, after the set time:

"... The LORD remembered her.  
Wherefore it came to pass ... that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, Saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD." I Samuel 1:19-20.

Samuel (heard of the Lord) was born, for Hannah had asked in faith, and indeed God heard. Each time his father or mother spoke or heard that name, it would be a reminder, and they would rejoice in God's blessing.

Later on they were further blessed, as the baby Samuel grew, and Hannah kept her vow, bringing her only child to enter the service of God. The high priest's (Eli) words to Elkanah and Hannah were:

"... The LORD give thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the LORD...  
And the LORD visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters..." I Samuel 2:20-21.

What great blessing for Hannah! The provocation of the adversary was removed, and Elkanah and his wife rejoiced in the children divinely given because of "the loan which (was) lent to the LORD" as Hannah kept her vow. Her spirit was further revealed as she offered the newly-weaned Samuel to Eli, the priest:

“For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him:

Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshipped the LORD there.” I Samuel 1:27-28.

We think of a loan or something lent as given temporarily, and so to be returned upon request. The word lent or loan means to inquire, to request or to desire. It probably is used for loan or lent in the sense of asking for or requesting the use of something. Let us listen again to Hannah’s words to the high priest:

“For this child I prayed: and the LORD hath given me my petition (desire, request) which I asked of him:

... as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD...”

I Samuel 1:27-28.

Would she not often miss her little child, long for him? Surely here were two of the many in Israel—Elkanah and Hannah—who valued the word of the LORD; it was precious to them. As they gave Samuel to the Lord, Hannah’s mind is revealed for us:

“... Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD...” I Samuel 2:1.

Would it not be hard to rejoice at the loss of her only son? Yes, but her faith had been proven, and she did it believing he had been lent only in reply to her request and her vow. She returned what was lent to the One who gave him. She further rejoiced in the perception of God’s great blessing to those who turn to Him:

“... mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.”

I Samuel 2:1.

Salvation, deliverance from her enemies, such as the other wife, Peninnah, who had so grievously provoked her. But much more was in her mind, as the rest of her prayer reveals. She looked for a Savior, the Messiah to come, the Son of God, given to bring deliverance to His people:

“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, ... the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed (Messiah).” I Samuel 2:9-10.

Hannah trusted in God’s purpose, seen in a small way in the giving of Samuel (God has heard), and to be seen in the coming of Jesus (Savior) to accomplish all of God’s purpose. We read no more of Hannah who was so greatly favored, as her name indicates. But what a message she has left for us!

Let us now go back to the time when the young Samuel was “lent to the LORD.” It was indeed a time of trouble for Israel. Eli was still living, failing to restrain his evil sons, and Israel continued to turn from the word of God. In God’s purpose, Samuel was sent at this time to help Israel return to their God. In the beginning, while the youth was still under the tutelage of Eli the priest, we are told:

“... Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.” I Samuel 3:7.

God then spoke to him revealing what was to come upon Eli’s house (I Samuel 3:12-14). When the young Samuel heard this he “feared to shew Eli the vision” (Verse 15). This presented a severe trial for him. Would he, could he reveal to Eli the condemning vision of the judgment to come? However, when Eli directly asked about the Lord’s message:

“... Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him...” I Samuel 3:18.

Thus began Samuel’s work under the hand of God as “vision” was restored to Israel. As a result of his faithfulness:

“... Samuel grew (not just in years), and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.” I Samuel 3:19.

He honored God’s word, faithfully conveying it to Israel, because it was “precious” to him. He revered it, allowing it to work in himself, and through him, in Israel.

Samuel’s example can be a help for us today, Brethren and Sisters, as we live in a world where the word of God is largely ignored, denied and blasphemed, and where there is clearly no

“open vision.” There are only very few, a remnant, who know and trust in that word, who ask, who pray, seeking to please the Almighty. He responds in a measure as when He heard Hannah’s supplication and vow. Our calling is to be His sons and daughters. We have vowed to give our living to Him and be subject to His word, striving to deny self in following His Son, His Messiah. We are called to be faithful servants of God, and as such, are striving to keep our vow: “All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient” (Exodus 24:7). What must we do in order to keep that vow and thus hope for the Almighty’s blessing? Paul helps us:

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present (yield) your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.”

Romans 12:1-2.

Since we are His servants, bound by a willing vow, it is indeed our reasonable (logical, according to His word) service to devote our lives and loyalty in love for the One who has called us. Let us, Brethren and Sisters, look into our own hearts, that indeed our Master’s desires are primary in our general plans, in our daily occupations, our choice of companions, and our hoped-for goals. How wonderful if we can be found to have lived our lives “by faith”, as Samuel did, as he was “lent to the LORD.”

*J.A.DeF.*

**"NOT WHAT I WILL"**

From our readings in Mark we have contemplated the Lord Jesus' final hours and seen His determination to perfectly finish the work given of God. He had prepared all during His life for this moment and now just before His death, He prayed for strength that God's purpose in Him be accomplished:

"And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt." Mark 14:35-36.

Endeavoring to submit to the circumstances, His determination in the face of great physical agony and hardship, reveals a spiritual strength unequalled by any other man, serving as an example for all who strive to follow Him.

The account of His exchange with Pilate, just prior to His death, reveals His keen singleness of purpose lest He fail so close to the end. He was taken by those sent from the chief priests and elders and delivered to Pilate for questioning and ultimately crucifixion:

"Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?

Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?" John 18:33-34.

The conspirators had accused Him of blasphemy for calling Himself the "Christ, the Son of the Blessed" (Mark 14:61). Not being a Jew, Pilate questioned Jesus saying, "What hast thou done?"—no doubt puzzled why a people would surrender their king to be killed. Jesus replied:

"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." John 18:36.

In his reply, we see His mind focused upon the kingdom of God and the fulfillment of the gospel message, only possible through His submission and death. Pilate unsure of His meaning questioned further, "... Art thou a king then?" and Jesus answered:

“Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.”  
John 18:37.

Sadly, few in Israel heard that voice or believed in the One sent as their Saviour; they delivered Him instead to the Romans for crucifixion. Though not comprehending the man before him, Pilate felt troubled, for he could find no fault worthy of death. Sensing Jesus’ integrity and nobility, and hearing the Jews claim that, “he made himself the Son of God”, Pilate’s fear grew. Going back to the judgment hall he questioned Jesus again:

“Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.”

John 19:9-11.

Jesus knew that nothing Pilate could do would save Him from this hour. His ministry was nearing the end and His suffering must be accomplished before dying blameless. So He pressed on, determined to fulfill the will of His Father.

Upon reading this account, we should be moved by Jesus’ courage and perseverance, that even in the face of pain, suffering and death He held fast to the charge given Him of God. Being flesh, the possibility of failure was always present and so He pressed on with utter determination, leaving all who love Him an example to follow:

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.”  
John 1:14.

From the beginning, God’s Truth has extended the promise of salvation to those called out to the hope of the gospel. Christ’s victory over His flesh nature assured that hope, leaving us an example to look to and endeavour to emulate in our living as we struggle against our own will, seeking to do His.

M.C.S.

DR THOMAS ON SPIRITUALISM  
A response to a communication challenging  
Dr. Thomas' position.

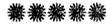
"In 1841, or thereabouts, I had the pleasure of an interview with Dr. Cory, at Little Fort, on Lake Michigan, now styled, I believe, Waukegan. He was then a member of the Campbellite "brotherhood", as it is styled by the chief; but he was in advance of that "divine", then, as now, a great friend of "the spirits", or of the doctrine concerning them, termed by Paul "the doctrine of demons", inasmuch as the doctor then believed the important truth, as he confesses in (his letter), that life beyond the grave depends upon a resurrection of the body. This invulnerable truth, it appears, Dr. Cory has entirely abandoned, and we now find him side-by-side with the Prince of the Brotherhood in the regions of midnight, and in telegraphic communication with gassy spirits and transparent ghosts, demons all in spirit-land.

Until the date of the epistle before us, nothing ever reached me from the doctor, or his familiar spirits, informing me whether he were dead, alive, or both at once; for, strange as it may appear, in spiritology, when a man is alive, he is alive; but when he is dead he is not dead; but dead and alive at once, being dead in this world and alive in the other, which is, as it were, somewhere next door to this. I am glad, however, to find that he is here, and not there—that he is still a whole living man; and that he is not a dead and alive man in both worlds at once. Though I don't know why I should be glad. Perhaps he does not thank me for my gladness; for upon spiritological principles a man both dead and alive at the same time must be better off, seeing that he has shuffled off all the troubles and vexations of this world with his mortal coil, and, as a "spirit", "ghost" or daimon, instead of refreshing bone and muscle in Lake Michigan, doth

Bathe in glassy realms his airy soul,  
In etherous seas of heavenly blue;  
Where no muddy wave of waters roll,  
But all's transparent to the view!

But as our friend Mack says, "to be serious", I am sorry to find by the letter before me, that the doctor has read seven volumes of the Herald to so little purpose. But this is not difficult to explain, and the explanation only deepens my regret; for while he considers me as an order of the old revelation, he assumes the position of

infidelity, which can see in Moses and the Prophets only discrepancies, fallibility, and spiritual magnetism. With a brain so perverted the Herald can do nothing; because all its statements and reasonings are to show what doctrine the Bible reveals for faith; but if, when this is brought out, it is met by a virtual rejection of the Scriptures, all demonstration from them is rendered null and void."



**FROM A LETTER RECEIVED BY THE REMNANT**

"--- since joining -- meeting both my wife and myself feel that we are in a meeting which does give us good fellowship based in the WORD and strongly influenced by the writings of Doctor Thomas. Our speakers are carefully chosen and our exhortations and gospel addresses are of a high standard.

I do realise that standards in many Ecclesias are falling dangerously low and deeply deplore the inability of many Ecclesias to rectify this position. This situation is due to lack of contact with the word and a craving for the things of the World. ---."

**Ecclesial Autonomy**

The extract from the above letter, we believe, shows how an over emphasis of the tradition of ecclesial autonomy has brought about such a state of laxity. Each ecclesia is now allowed to largely do whatever it is inclined to do. Other ecclesias no longer can bring a necessary admonitory check on wrong doings and erroneous views.

This was never the original intention in the days of R. Roberts. The advice in his days was to avoid interference of one ecclesia with another.

But it was also held that ecclesias were interdependent in their commitment to common truth. Ecclesial autonomy was to avoid unnecessary controversy on matters peripheral to the truth. When principles of Truth were threatened from any quarter, it is obvious ecclesial autonomy did not apply, hence the firm action taken over "partial inspiration" "non-responsibility of enlightened rejectors" etc.

The over emphasis on ecclesial autonomy has brought about the unhappy position lamented by our correspondent.

A BIBLE CLASS  
"A GARDEN INCLOSED"  
Song of Solomon 4:12

Our consideration is from the Song of Solomon, a song reflecting the love known between a man and his bride to be. Figuratively it speaks to us of the supreme and loving care which exists between the Lord Jesus and His bride. Paul wrote to his brethren in Corinth of this blessed relationship:

"... I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." II Corinthians 11:2.

Also he wrote of this special relationship in the letter to his brethren in Ephesus:

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Ephesians 5:25-27.

Going now to our study of the Song of Solomon (chapter 4:12) - the waiting bridegroom speaks of His bride to be:

"A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." Song of Solomon 4:12.

A garden is a carefully cultivated area, hedged in - that is, enclosed and protected from without, bringing enjoyment and, in time, fruit for the one caring for it. The bridegroom describes with pleasure the fruit which the bride as His garden brings to Him:

"Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices." Song of Solomon 4:13-14.

All these carefully tended plants produce a sweet smell,

bringing pleasure. We know of frankincense as we read in Exodus 30:34. It was a part of the holy incense offered by the priest on the incense altar - prayer offered to signify God's holiness and a desire to honor Him. Also some of these spices were used in the holy oil for the anointing of the priests for their service before God (Exodus 30:23-25). Does it not tell us also of the bride's efforts to bring pleasure? Her spirit is revealed for us as she speaks:

"Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits."  
Song of Solomon 4:16.

Her desire is to bring forth fruits which are pleasing, a sweet fragrance to her beloved. The figure of the garden with its pleasing fruits and sweet odors helps us to perceive what the Lord Jesus hopes for in those who desire to be His bride. They are to be His saints now in probation, but who will live and reign with Him in His kingdom.

The bridegroom sees his sister, his spouse as a garden en-  
closed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed - each of which implies a careful hedging about as a protective separation from intruders or harmful worldly influences, designating this garden as belonging exclusively to Him. The "pleasant fruits" of that bride-garden will flow out, glorifying and pleasing Him as her Head, and reflecting her desire and longing to be with Him, able to honor and praise Him. The fulfillment of this is revealed as God spoke through His prophet Isaiah:

"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.  
For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth: so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."  
Isaiah 61:10-11.

Those who live in this hope of being joined to their Head, the Lord Jesus at His return, will keep themselves now for Him; and, in this time of probation will labor to bring forth those sweet fruits which are so pleasing to Him and to His Father. Their desire will be

like that of David's, who was beloved of the Lord as a man after His own heart:

"I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.  
Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.  
Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.  
Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven."  
Psalm 85:8-11.

Let us, trusting and striving to become His bride, hear what the Lord speaks: living in obedience, loving and trusting Him, giving pleasure now, and looking with hope for the time of His Son's return. Then the marriage of the Lamb will come about, and the spirit of the bride, now longing and waiting, will joyfully reach out:

"... Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits."  
Song of Solomon 4:16.

Centuries later, the Apostle John in a vision was given by Jesus the words which fulfill the spirit, and reveal the reality of what we have here considered, and for which we long:

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.  
And there came unto me one of the seven angels ... saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife."  
Revelation 21:2,9.

*J.A. DeF.*

**FOR THEY ARE NOT ALL ISRAEL WHICH ARE OF ISRAEL**  
(Romans 9:6)

Paul in writing to his Roman brethren, emphasized God's great mercy extended to them as Gentiles grafted into the hope of Israel. That natural Israel through lack of faith, and believing in their own righteousness had lost the hope of salvation, grieved him sorely as he wrote:

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."

Romans 10:1-3

Having become so steeped in the traditions of the elders, Israel observed the letter of the law with "a zeal of God", but overlooked the "knowledge" contained therein, which pointed forward to Christ. Therefore, few of natural Israel received the Lord Jesus or embraced His gospel message.

"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.

But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness;

Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;

As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."

Romans 9:30-33.

Paul taught that the measure of a true or spiritual Israelite under the law, could be seen by his ability to take hold of the promise of Christ the Messiah through faith, seeing Him as God had designed in the sacrifices, the feast days and sabbaths, the tabernacle and its contents, and especially in the spirit of love and submission throughout the law in loving "thy neighbour as thyself". With this in mind we can better understand why Paul said:

"... For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:

Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children:

That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Romans 9:6-8.

Without belief in the Lord Jesus as their Messiah, Israel had no hope of salvation - the birthright of being a Jew, the seed of Abraham was not enough without faith and works.

Jacob and Esau were twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah, both the literal seed of Abraham and heirs of the promises, but of them the Lord said through the prophet Malachi:

"... Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob,  
And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness." Malachi 1:2-3.

Both were the seed of Abraham through Isaac, yet one was loved while the other hated - a very practical illustration of "they are not all Israel, which are of Israel". Jacob, named Israel by God, valued the promised inheritance, seeing in faith a clear vision of God's purpose with His children and wanting above all else, to be part of this heritage. Esau on the other hand, held the birthright granted him as the elder, in such low esteem that he sold it to Jacob for a meal to satisfy his hunger:

"And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint:

And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom.

And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?

And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.

Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright." Genesis 25:29-34.

Who then are God's Israel? Paul again provides the answer:

"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.

In God's eyes, one can become a spiritual Jew, regardless of background, through a love for, and uniting to Him and His Son in obedience to His word. Paul wrote to the brethren at Colosse, teaching of this spiritual adoption through belief in Christ Jesus, exhorting them to:

"... put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all." Colossians 3:10-11.

As John the Baptist went throughout Israel preaching of the coming Messiah and baptizing the repentant, he said to the Pharisees and Sadducees who counted themselves righteous because of their lineage as Jews:

"... O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Matthew 3:7-9.

There were many in Israel who said, "We be Abraham's seed", thinking this was sufficient to attain unto salvation as the seed of promise. However, their heritage meant nothing if the spirit of faith and righteousness was not alive within and displayed in works pleasing to the Father.

This applies to many today who claim to be the brethren of Christ or identify themselves with the name "Christian", but fail to be obedient to His word, substituting as did Israel of old, the traditions of men for the gospel message taught by Christ and His apostles. If they walk not in His spirit of submission and obedience, regardless of the name they bear, they are in darkness and without hope.

The teaching of Paul makes it very clear how the Almighty views those who are striving to be His "Israel", or as that word means, "have power as a prince with God". Our attention therefore must be focused upon the Lord Jesus Christ and that victory in which His brethren will share, prevailing through faith, obedience and good works, hoping at His return to be counted among those who are recognized as His at His judgment seat.

M.C.S.

DR THOMAS AND THE JEWISH BOY

"In his account of his visit to the Continent, Dr. Thomas narrates how, in Rotterdam, on his way to visit the Protestant Cathedral, he was overtaken by a Jewish boy, who offered to show him the cathedral. "Not being in need of his services," says Dr. Thomas, "I declined them. He then proposed to sell me some cigars. But I did not wish to buy. Perceiving that he was a Jew, I turned his attention from trade to the subject of Messiah, by asking him if he were not an Israelite. At first he denied his nation; but when I declared my certainty that he was, he confessed it. I told him that I was also a Jew, but not in Moses, though I believed in that great prophet. This sounded strangely in his ears, and gave rise to the following conversation:

Boy - Are you not a Christian?

Editor - Yes; but neither a Protestant nor a Papist - (having arrived at the cathedral, I continued) - I do not believe in Cathedral religion.

Boy - But you believe in the Bible, don't you?

Editor - Yes; and for that very reason I do not believe in the religion of Europe; for neither Protestantism nor Romanism are taught in the Bible.

Boy - The Jews believe in Moses.

Editor - Not so, or they would believe in Jesus, for Moses wrote concerning Him.

Boy - Ah, but we look for Messiah who will be a God. Jesus was nothing but a man, whom our people hanged. Jesus is not Christ.

Editor - Yes, Messiah must be a God in the sense of being the Son of God, and consequently more than an ordinary man. Jesus was this, and more. He was also Son of David, as your own genealogies prove, and is therefore the King of Israel. Your fathers hanged their king; but God raised him from the dead, and by this proved his claims to be just and true. He is the Messiah, and you need look for no other.

Boy - No, Jesus is not Christ. When Christ comes, he will restore Israel, and make all nations Jews. Jesus did not do this.

Editor - Simply because the time had not then come. Israel will be restored as you say, and will become the greatest of all nations. God will do this; but he will also do it by Jesus Christ."

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

“--- I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy ---” (Revelation 17:3)

The fact that the beast entity, so depicted, is seen to be full of names, indicates the association of those names in one system, which has a religious connotation because it is termed blasphemous (which of course means ‘that’ which is against true religion).

Note the following words, they are very apt:-

“How could it ever have entered into the heart of John, the solitary exile of Patmos, to imagine, that any of the professed disciples of that Saviour whom he loved, and who said, ‘My kingdom is not of this world’, should gather up and systematise all the idolatry and superstition and immorality of the Babylon of Belshazzar, introduce it into the bosom of the Church, and, by help of it, seat themselves on the throne of the Caesars, and there, as the high-priests of the Queen of Heaven, and gods upon earth --- rule the nations ---. Human foresight could never have done this; but all this the exile of Patmos has done. His pen, then, must have been guided by Him who sees the end from the beginning, and who calls the things that be not as though they were. And if the wisdom of God now shines forth so brightly from the Divine expression, ‘Babylon the Great’, into which such an immensity of meaning has been condensed, ought not that to lead us the more to reverence and adore the same wisdom that is in reality stamped on every page of the inspired Word?” (Alexander Hislop).

But now, increasing laxity is bringing the Queen of Heaven worship, and the gods of the earth, into an “open” connection with the churches, as distinct from the previous veiled association with the ancient pagan sources.

At the time of writing it is reported that, “Witches and pagans are to join ‘Christians’ in a camp near Avebury, Wiltshire, a neolithic site that is the pagan equivalent of a cathedral.”

The pagans associating with the ‘Christians’ were said to worship gods ranging from “the Horned Lord” to the Sun and the Earth. They were to be addressed by a Roman Catholic priest and an Anglican vicar in an inter-faith meeting, possibly the first of its kind. After hearing the clerics, the pagans were to take part in a ritual at Avebury.

The organiser of this event is reported to have said, "We might find that we worship the same divinity by separate paths. Proselytism is banned." The Anglican parson is the leader of an ecumenical group.

According to one religious newspaper report, "--- paganism went underground in Britain in 1986 in the wake of antogonism from 'Christian' fundamentalists. Members used box numbers for addresses, and meetings were held with maximum security." There had been two occasions of "magic shops" which sold tarot cards and astrology writings, being burnt down.

It is now revealed that paganism is practised throughout Europe and America and even as far as Australasia. It is reckoned there are about a quarter of a million in Britain itself. One of these cults is the "neo-pagan movement" which practices the Wicca religion; it believes it is the successor of medieval witchcraft. There are also the Druids, a so-called nature religion. These are said to have four distinct societies one of which has continued for several hundred years. They meet regularly and incorporate many Wiccan practices into their rituals. Most of these groups are connected under a loose arrangement called the Pagan Federation.

How professed "Christians" can meet with such, and how it can be said that they could be worshipping the same divinity by separate paths, is quite astounding.

But such things are a fulfilment. The Revelation speaks of a general association of many religions, which are all divinely disapproved; and that when these come together in the way shown in the symbology, it will be the time of the Lamb of God, who will remove all falsity from the earth.

A seeking unto "wizards that peep, and that mutter" (Isaiah 8:19) is condemned. A few years ago such ecunemism would have been reprobated. The fact that religious outlook has so greatly changed that even acceptance of Wicca worshippers and Druids does not now cause any great concern, reveals the nearness of the time, when through divine judgment:-

"--- all (will) call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." (Zephaniah 3:9)

**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

Gratitude is felt for the divine help granted during this last year, in illness, in surgeries, in problems in the daily work as well as help in the affairs of the ecclesia. All these can seem overwhelming at times yet God does know and observes our reactions, granting His help.

Our thoughts go to the year 1995. Will it be the year for which we watch - Jesus' return? Whatever is ordained, our prayer is to be led by Him and to be helped to submit to His hand that His will be done.

*J.A.DeF.*

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

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

Another year commences, and the twenty first century looms ever nearer. It is prophesied that "the days will be shortened" at this point in God's great purpose, which is a sobering thought.

The times of the gentiles are indeed running out to a conclusion which will bring a change which at present is unimaginable.