

JULY 1995

A Monthly Magazine issued by

# The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of  
Papal and Protestant Christendom

A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

"Take heed that ye be not deceived"

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**AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD**

**"THE HOUSE...MUST BE EXCEEDING MAGNIFICAL"**

Let us try this morning to enter into the mind of David as he recognized that his last days were upon him. He had reigned forty years over Israel, taking the throne after long and steady persecution by Saul. Under his hand Israel prospered, the kingdom ultimately stretching from the Euphrates to the river of Egypt. As David looked back over the experiences of his lifetime, particularly would he be aware of and rejoice in God's ever-present hand with him, especially from the day of his anointing to be king. At that time he was the eighth and youngest son of Jesse, a shepherd lad not even summoned by his father when Samuel came to choose one of his sons to be king. When he was anointed by the prophet, the record tells us:

"... the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward...."  
I Samuel 16:13.

The Spirit remained with him all his days. As the king reviewed his life, knowing it was soon to end, how grateful and how blessed he would feel, bringing to mind those experiences with the lion and the bear, Goliath, Saul, Absalom, Shimei, and all his adversaries. He would recall, too, how he had been helped in his determination to honor God, as evidenced by his living and by his spirit revealed to us in the Psalms. He would meditate also upon his failures - Bathsheba, Uriah - a grievous failure worthy of death under the law, as he allowed his own desires to overrule those of the Almighty. He endured God's punishing judgment for the rest of his life. Yet the Lord spared David because of his submissive and repentant spirit, so quick to acknowledge:

"I have sinned against the Lord."  
II Samuel 12:13.

Then, David would remember how he brought up the ark upon a cart, failing, along with the Levites, to bring it according to "the due order". He would ponder how he had persisted in numbering Israel, ignoring Joab's warning. How he would have grieved that seventy thousand in Israel perished by the Almighty's choice of judgment, sending pestilence which raged until David offered upon the altar at the threshingfloor of Araunah. Our brother's sorrow as he witnessed what had been brought upon Israel was;

"... Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house."  
II Samuel 24:17.

Above all, David must have sought frequently the comfort of the promises given to him by the Almighty. These were anchors of his faith, for they spoke of a son, a throne, a kingdom and a house - all to endure forever, to be accomplished in a first sense in his own son, Solomon, but ultimately through his greater Son to whom he looked in hope and trust. These, the "sure mercies of David", sustained and helped him to glorify God. He would be assured once more as Bathsheba bore a second son:

"... he called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him. And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah (beloved of the LORD), because of the LORD."  
II Samuel 12:24-25.

The king would know God had forgiven him, and that child by Bathsheba would ultimately become the One who would rule over God's perfected people.

David, whose heart turned to God, would think of the house of the Lord to be built by Solomon. We know of his total preparations for it in accordance with the divine pattern given:

"All this, said David, the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern."  
I Chronicles 28:19.

It is not known at what period in David's life this pattern was revealed, but what a great encouragement! These directions were given not only in a vision, but "in writing by his hand upon me." Can we visualize David's reaction as he began to understand how magnificent, how glorious it was to be - truly the dwelling place of God? His further reaction, a great example to us, was: What can I do to help make it so?

"... the house that is to be builded for the LORD must be exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death."  
I Chronicles 22:5.

His selfless work is recorded for us:

"Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver: and of brass and iron without weight; ... timber also and stone have I prepared; ..."

I Chronicles 22:14.

It was in his trouble that David put forth these great efforts. Trouble speaks of affliction, chastening, gentling. He did experience these, and even in their midst his mind was centered upon God's house. From the pattern given he would realize the extent of materials needed and would put forth unceasing effort. Where did the gold, silver, jewels, brass and iron come from? Much was spoils from David's conquests, which he dedicated to this work (I Chronicles 18:7-11). In addition, David gave of his own treasure:

"Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God....  
Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house.  
Even three thousand talents of gold ... and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the house withal."  
I Chronicles 29:2-4.

This man's delight was in the work for the house for which, though he was not permitted to build, he gave of his "own proper good." This phrase is also used as jewel or peculiar treasure, helping us to understand David's ardent desire to do all he could, giving to God that which was precious to himself. This word peculiar is used by Moses, speaking to Israel before entering the land:

"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth."  
Deuteronomy 14:2.

Malachi, too, reveals the Almighty's regard for those who are His:

"Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name."  
Malachi 3:16.

Of these He has promised:

"And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels (peculiar treasure); and I will spare them...."

Malachi 3:17.

So we see when David dedicted of “his own proper good” he selected the best, the special and treasured materials to give to the house of the Lord. Pondering this, we cannot but ask, Brethren and Sisters, Are our efforts as devoted and enduring? Life is ever full of temporal things, but let us remember the “peculiar people” we have been so privileged to become in His great mercy.

As he came to the end of his days, David’s mind was to examine himself, to ask: Have I done all I can? I have labored long and have given of my precious things; is there still a lack? Is there anything more I can do to honor God and His house? He had set in order singers, priests, porters, Levites - all appointed to their place in that house yet to be. How zealous was his preparation, his giving unstintingly. He recognized his great privilege to work toward the “magnifical” house which Solomon his son would soon build. His mind is expressed for us, as we have read this morning:

“... Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel...  
Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all.  
I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness.  
As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: ...” I Chronicles 29:10,11,17.

How pleasing was David, truly a man after God’s own heart. Much concerning David is given to help us in our life’s work to please our Father. As we have shared our brother’s meditations this morning, let us be newly aware of our privilege in being so called to do a work for the house of God. And let us be thankful indeed, examining our work, our living, our spirits, above all seeking to increase devotion to the Father and His Son.

Soon the greater Son of David will come to assemble God’s house and to reign upon the throne of that kingdom for one thousand years. With Him will be those who, like David, have wholly dedicated their lives to the honor of God and to the edifying of His house. Let us keep our hearts and minds upon that divine pattern soon to be a reality, in hope of a part in that house which will indeed be “exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries”, and so, with David, vow:

“I will therefore now make preparation for it.”  
I Chronicles 22:5.

*J.A.DeF.*

**"SET APART HIM THAT IS GODLY"**

Help and guidance is given through the Psalms, as David's mind and spirit are revealed for our instruction. Striving to be known as a man after God's own heart, he valued the Almighty's promise of care and protection for His people. In Psalm 4, David explains in one short verse, this relationship:

"But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him."

Psalm 4:3.

Christendom's clergy teaches that God is good to all and His beneficence unconditional, yet here the spirit plainly says He has set apart or separated a people from all others for His use. The phrase "set apart" comes from a prime root meaning "to distinguish". God has therefore separated a people for His use. What distinguishes them from all others? They are those who upon receiving His Word, accept it with humility and gratitude, endeavoring to apply its precepts in their living, after the example of their Head, the Lord Jesus.

From the beginning, the Almighty has through His mercy and grace extended to those who walk before Him in obedience, the hope of an escape from the sentence of death placed upon all flesh - thus distinguishing them from the rest of the world. Such particular blessing is seen in Moses' instruction to Israel concerning the last plague to come upon Egypt:

"And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.

But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel."

Exodus 11:5,7.

As Israel in obedience to the Almighty, struck upon their doorposts the blood of the unblemished lamb, all in the house were protected when the angel of death passed over, thus distinguishing His people from the Egyptians. His deliverance was extended to those who called upon His name. It is to those alone David spake in Psalm 4:3 — "the LORD will hear".

The 32nd Psalm entitled, "A Psalm of David, Maschil" (meaning instruction) allows us to be taught through the spirit's instruction as David writes:

"I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found:"

Psalm 32:5-6.

## THE REMNANT

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This faithful man felt privileged to commune with the Almighty, turning to Him when in trouble and distress, humbly confessing his sins as failure loomed, lest he find himself in danger of losing that special distinction as one of His little ones. God looks for this right spirit in all who call upon Him, for as the Creator, He knows man's frame, and waits patiently for an obedient response:

"With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright;  
With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward. For thou wilt save the afflicted people; but wilt bring down high looks."

Psalm 18:25-27.

David reminds us that humility must be foremost in one seeking the Father's love and care. Only those who keep under the carnal man and so conform to His precepts, will be sheltered under His covering, while those of "high looks" or a proud nature will He "bring down".

"Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee."

Psalm 86:4-5.

David's soul or being was lifted up in praise to God as he endeavored to elevate his living to a higher plane, one even more pleasing to the Almighty. Because of his faithful efforts, he was singled out and anointed by God to reign over His people, as well as given the promise of an eternal kingship through One yet to come at the appointed time, Jesus the greater Son of David:

"For the LORD is our defence; and the Holy One of Israel is our king.

Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him:

His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven."

Psalm 89:18-20,29.

He looked in hope for that holy seed promised to one day rule God's kingdom of peace, and he longed to be part of that blessed throng so honored and numbered among His saints.

David's mind was and still is a positive influence, as he left these words and the record of his living for our help and guidance. We too endeavor to be counted among those set apart for His use. How can this be achieved? David explains:

"Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.  
Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the LORD."  
Psalm 4:4-5.

This faithful Psalmist allowed the spirit to work upon the man of flesh within himself, quieting the restlessness and natural ungodliness of the carnal man through the power of the Word, while looking ahead to the hope set before those who are to be distinguished as His sons and daughters - set apart for His use eternally.

M.C.S.



### THOUGHTS ON CHRIST AND JOB

Job suffered greatly from his contemporaries even as the Lord Jesus did from the people of His generation. The feelings of Job are indicated in the following:-

"But now they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock."  
(Job 30:1)

"Among the bushes they brayed; under the nettles they were gathered together. They were children of fools, yea, children of base men: they were viler than the earth."  
(Job 30:7-8)

These taunters were not acting because of an understanding of sublime things, but rather because of Job's reduced circumstances, taking advantage of his fall from power. Their disrespect is again referred to in the following:-

"Because he hath loosed my cord, and afflicted me, they have also let loose the bridle before me.  
Upon my right hand rise up the youth; they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction."  
(Job 30:11-12)

So Job was afflicted with the unbridled spite of his fellows. This was an adding to his sorrows over the wrong accusations of his three false friends.

The situation brings to remembrance the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Against Him also were the false accusers and the rabble who cried out with loud and vexatious crudeness, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him."

Job in his great trial felt weak, revealed in the following:-

"And now my soul is poured out upon me; the days of affliction have taken hold upon me."  
(Job 30:16)

"He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes. I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me: I stand up, and thou regardest me not.

Thou art become cruel to me: with thy strong hand thou opposest thyself against me." (Job 30:19-21)

"When I looked for good, then evil came unto me: and when I waited for light, there came darkness." (Job 30:26)

This was great suffering, but not as great as the sufferings of the Lord Jesus, nailed so painfully to that cross by the cruelty of men. Job cried out "- - - thou dost not hear me - - -." Jesus in His weakness cried: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

The example of Jesus is a far greater example of submission and righteousness.

Comparisons of Jesus and Job may be made with the following:-

"Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? was not my soul grieved for the poor?" (Job 30:25)

So it was with Jesus, as at the grave of Lazarus, He wept. He showed great compassion to the needy and the sick. But how much greater was Jesus than Job; with Jesus there was no complaint. Jesus had nowhere to lay His head, but we do not hear Him lament about it as Job.

When Jesus was accused by the priests at His Tribunal, He kept silence and answered not again. Now Job was undoubtedly a righteous man, and is held up as an example. But in comparison with Jesus, Job falls far short. It is a consideration which helps us to understand how wonderful was the life of Christ.

Job protested his righteousness (and rightly so) as follows:-

"If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail;

Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; --- If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering;

If his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate."

(Job 31:16-21)

But when do we hear Jesus protesting His righteousness? His words were, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God." Jesus, then, rises far above Job in obedience to the ways of the Spirit, and the book of Job helps us to realise it. As we read of the struggles of Job, a righteous man; a faithful man; we are nevertheless caused to see that Job was also a member of the failing human race, needing a Saviour.

**A BIBLE CLASS**

**“Come ye yourselves apart”  
(Mark 6:31)**

These words were spoken by the Lord Jesus to His twelve apostles as they gathered to share news of their recent ministry. However, this quiet time was soon to be denied, as the crowd, hearing of the Master’s presence, thronged about them causing Jesus to say:

“... Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.” Mark 6:31.

Earlier in the chapter we read He had sent these twelve to preach the gospel and heal the sick:

“And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no script no bread, no money in their purse

But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.” Mark 6:7-9, 12-13.

Now as they gathered to reflect upon that work and share the experiences of their journeys, the multitude so crowded them that there was not time even to partake of a meal together. With care for their physical and spiritual welfare, the Lord Jesus suggested they separate themselves from the excited crowd, and find solace and refreshment in a quiet place.

Knowing the flesh’s weakness, He also knew the importance of solitude and making time for meditation and prayer, especially after trying circumstances. Many times during His own ministry the Lord Jesus had escaped to the mountains alone to gain spiritual strength from His Father through prayer. He had empowered these disciples with a measure of the Holy Spirit, instructing them to preach the gospel, heal the sick and perform miracles as evidence of their authority from on high.

However, even though enabled with this power, there came a time when they could not effect a cure. A father had brought his son, afflicted by a dumb and deaf spirit to the disciples for healing, but when they failed he appealed to the Lord Jesus saying:

“... Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;

And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.

When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."

Mark 9:17-18,25-29.

How evident in this example is the need for quiet contemplation—spending more time on prayer, abstaining from normal activities, striving for a closer communication with our Father, through whom come all blessings. We too are involved in a work of witnessing, but without the power granted to the disciples. However, this illustration shows the necessity of, "come ye yourselves apart", to establish a time of quiet spiritual strengthening and push into the background the daily distractions of busy lives.

There has been a Rest promised for those accounted acceptable when the Lord Jesus returns to judge the responsible. As we set ourselves apart each first day of the week to remember the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, we are to reflect upon this hope and seek the spiritual sustenance available from the gathering together of those of like mind, focusing our attention upon the longed for goal of salvation set before us.

The difference between Martha and Mary's priorities brings this thought into clear perspective. As the Lord Jesus was a guest in their home, Martha was busily occupied preparing to serve a meal. Mary on the other hand sat at Jesus' feet, listening with rapt attention to the wisdom of His words. Looking for help with the household duties, Martha appealed to the Lord Jesus saying:

"... Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Luke 10:40-42.

Mary valued this time of closeness with the Lord Jesus, listening to His preaching, and knowing that the mundane matters of daily life would eventually fall into place. She was careful over what should come first—knowing that her spiritual well-being was of chief importance.

As we perceive the importance Jesus placed upon “come ye yourselves apart” does it help us to better organize our busy lives? Do we need to weigh over whether the time we give to “coming apart” is ample and done in a spirit and state of mind which is pleasing to our Father?

M.C.S.



**“MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU  
FORSAKEN ME”**

A religious correspondent to a National Newspaper, writing about a visit to a Welsh Cathedral had this to say about the experience:-

“Our parish eucharist was followed by the cathedral’s own sung eucharist.

In our Old Testament reading from Zechariah, we heard: “As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your captives free from the waterless pit.”

Our Gospel reading, from Matthew, contained one of the most inexplicable of all Bible texts, when Christ on the Cross cries out “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani”, or: “My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?” In his sermon (the speaker) called us to penitence. “We ourselves have had a hand in nailing Him to that Cross” - - - “His being denied and mocked and jeered, are all things that were not events of 2000 years ago, but things we have participated in, in our own lives.” “We are but dust. it is enough to drive us to contrition and to penitence. Remember that thou art dust, and to dust we shall return.” We came to greet the King, “who came to die for us and to die because of us” but “we also greet the King who came to rise for us and to ascend to the highest heaven, the King who invites us beyond to reign with him on high.”

One can understand the writer of the above saying how inexplicable are the words of Christ on the Cross. The correspondent, a worshipper at the Cathedral on the occasion mentioned, will doubtless be a believer in the Athanasian Creed from which proceeds the following:-

## THE REMNANT

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“And the Catholick Faith is this: That we worship One God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity. Neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance.

For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son: and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one: the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost.

The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate: and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible: and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible.

The Father eternal, the Son eternal: and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet they are not three eternals: but one eternal. As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated: but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible. So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty: and the Holy Ghost Almighty.

And yet they are not three Almighty: but one Almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God: and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet they are not three Gods: but one God. - - - Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation: that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For the right Faith is, that we believe and confess: that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man; God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds: and Man of the Substance of his Mother, born in the world;

Perfect God, and perfect Man: of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting;

Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead; and inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood. Who although he be God and Man: yet he is not two, but one Christ;

One; not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh: but by taking of the Manhood into God - - -

This is the Catholick Faith: which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved - - -”

No wonder the religious correspondent said how inexplicable was the text, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Going on to say, “After all this, I badly needed a cup of tea,” but adding that worship (at the Cathedral) was “at once chastening and uplifting.”

One of course can see the dilemma in the mind of such. How could one who was God as well as man cry to that Greatness of “Trinity in Unity”, of which He was a part, “- - - why hast thou forsaken me?”

The simple scriptural answer of course is that Jesus was "the Son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1) as well as Son of God by the miracle of His birth. That up to the time of His death, He had all the weaknesses inherent in the body of flesh. That when He cried out on the Cross, it was in the agony of that very great trial, and in a beseeching to His Father, which those words implied.

Jesus needed deliverance from mortality (which would not have been the case in a pre-existent Christ). And this is confirmed by the clear scriptural statements:-

"He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever." (Psalm 21:4)

"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." (Hebrews 9:12)

Note: redemption first for Himself: "for us" not being in the original text, as indicated by the italics in the King James Bible.



**"HIM WILL MY FATHER HONOUR"**

John 12:26

These words were spoken by Jesus as He knew His time of probation was near to ending:

"The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified." John 12:23.

His struggle, His determination was to glorify His Father by subjection to His will. To that end He willingly gave His life, and acknowledging this, could pray:

"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

And now, O Father, glorify thou me..." John 17:4-5.

Would it help us to ponder carefully, How did Jesus glorify God? He explains:

"... Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

John 12:24.

Jesus, by dying, gave His life - both actually and spiritually - in accordance with His Father's will, and thereby made possible the joining to God of those who seek to follow His Son. What does it mean for one to follow Jesus? He made it very clear to His disciples:

"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.  
If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: ..." John 12:25-26.

In what way is it possible to hate one's life in this present world, for at times we may, as God's children, feel to enjoy our lives? Jesus again explains:

"... If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Matthew 16:24.

To "deny self" necessitates a saying No to those fleshly yearnings which can so easily entice one away from God's narrow way which leads to life, and into the often more pleasing broad way which leads only to destruction. To those who sincerely dedicate their lives to serving Jesus, in forsaking, in feeling a strong aversion to the vanity and emptiness of life in this world, Jesus, who experienced these feelings, gave a promise:

"... if any man serve me, him will my Father honour." John 12:26.

His Father would find such a one valuable, precious in His sight, a quality to be sought after and worthy to be bought with a price. Honour and its root word also implies to be precious or had in reputation. Those who vow to follow Jesus are thus valued by the Almighty, for whom He has given His Son as a Redeemer for them. Paul reminds us:

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

I Corinthians 6:19-20.

Having been so bought or ransomed, one belongs to God. If we recognize that blessed position, our main desire and working must be to serve Him now, acknowledging that at best, "We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (See Luke 17:10). Paul again helps us to know how we can so serve our God:

"Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

... glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

For there is no respect of persons with God."

Romans 2:6-7, 10-11.

“Well doing” is a working for good, reverencing God by obedience to His word, thus following His Son. These works are a part of serving the Almighty, and if lovingly and willingly pursued, will result in one’s being honored by the Almighty God of all the earth, when Jesus returns to judge His people.

In our chapter under consideration, we have an example of one who did good, honoring Jesus and His Father. Mary, sister of Lazarus and Martha, anointed Jesus’ feet with a costly ointment, and wiped them with her hair. As a result:

“... the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.”  
John 12:3.

Because of her “good work”, the whole house was filled with a sweet smell, pleasing to all present and to God. There was one present, however, who was thinking of self, not honoring God nor His Son. Judas revealed his evil thoughts as he asked:

“Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?”  
John 12:5.

This man, we are told, cared not for the poor, but was a thief, desiring for himself the three hundred pence (equivalent to almost a year’s wages). Jesus, pleased by Mary’s loving work, honored her:

“... Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.”  
John 12:7.

In Mark’s record of Mary’s very perceptive anointing of Jesus’ feet, He spoke further which can help each of us:

“She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.  
Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.”  
Mark 14:8-9.

Mary did “what she could” - ministering to and reverencing Jesus and His Father. For this she was in turn honored by Jesus’ spoken praise. Her example is a practical one, revealing her heart’s desire to value God’s gracious provision for our eternal life through Jesus’ having paid the price.

Let us “serve” Him, “follow” Him, believing and yearning for this promise spoken to us by the Lord Jesus:

... “If any man serve me, him will my Father honour.”

*J.A.DeF.*

**THE BIBLE AS A LAW OF LIFE - - -**

(W. D. Jardine 1864)

"It is constantly an acting force, as inflexible in its operations, and as regardless in its distinction of person and intention. It ensures life on certain conditions and inflicts its punishments in violating of these conditions. Life and immortality are conferred only as the conditions it reveals are complied with, and whether a man be ignorant of these, regardless of them, a stately man or lowly man, a worthy man or otherwise, this Bible-law changes not. To those who comply, it is a savour of life unto life, to all other a savour of death unto death. And the limits to which the knowledge of the Bible is confined do not effect this conclusion. Its influence is as wide in its extent as that which is called nature's. It shines unseen as the sun shines while one half of nature is shrouded in darkness and a people and nation fast asleep. To argue that it hath no influence where it is not perceived and understood. The light that spreads over the beast and the savage is the same that gives the photographer his picture. If while a Lot was in Sodom, ten righteous had been, then the city would have been saved. This illustrates Bible influence. "Ye are the salt of the earth", said Christ to his disciples. This announces the fact. And in these days what hinders the destruction of the world - not the globe - but the few righteous that are in it? And what shall take place when the last judgment comes? - they shall be the first to be snatched from their graves, and the earth; to participate in the pouring out of the vengeance foretold. Now, these faithful preserve it, but "when the Son of man cometh" to avenge "shall he find faith on the earth?". The earth will then be without its salt, the people without their preservers, the faithful removed, the influence of the Bible laws suspended, and whether man understands this or not, the state of his understanding will not alter the fact. That which is set down in the history of the world as the cause of war, the origin of dynasties, the progress and ruin of nations, the setting up of kingdoms and the downfall of them, are found in scripture to have other causes due to occult influences set in motion for special purposes in the designs of the Deity, impenetrable to the mere political observer. These hidden influences and designs converge in scripture, and are revealed there only as it is studied and understood. And what more can be said of nature, or so much? She too hides her secrets from the superficial observer, however devout he may be in his worship of her. The road that leads "from nature up to nature's God," is broken, rugged, and uncertain. With scripture it is otherwise, but plain as the one is, and difficult and indefinite as the other is, in comparison they may be both so trod as to find God in neither. It is not what we look at in the one, or wonder at, or read in the other and

worship, that enables us to find him, but what we understand in both, that draws the veil which hides his countenance from us;

In what is called "nature" there is much that is useful to know. She is full of moral lessons, but sadly defective in anything satisfactory as to the worship of God. We have to worship Him not only in spirit, but in truth. All men, earnest and devout, manifest so much of the spirit, but if they have not the bible, or reject it, or misinterpret it, they cannot worship in truth, and as the truth the scripture reveals is not to be found by a search of nature, the searchings of scripture is the most important, and the right understanding of it, the greatest consequence. By tradition, by preconceived notions, by hackneyed thoughts, we may misinterpret it, and so misconceive the truth; treat it as a song, and so make it void. But from what we have learnt from the results of the investigations of science, we should take encouragement. Nature has been explored after a certain manner, and the achievements have been great. Why should the Bible not be studied after the same manner? The difficulties in the way appear much like what have appeared, and been cast out of the way, in the onward march of science, and nature is none the less her own interpreter than is the Bible. Nature even in her most apparent aspect has often been misinterpreted and is so still, and this by false impressions, which through the medium of external sense are conveyed to the mind. These appearances are nature's truly, but not nature's cheat. The ball which appears as a disc in the heavens, cannot appear in another shape at so great a distance, and it is for man to correct his ideas, not his senses. His senses do not cheat him either. His sense of sight cannot alter the appearance, though he may have discovered the cause. It is knowledge that is deficient; reason that hath no instrument to guide him, that cheats him, not his senses, nor nature's features. Rightly studied, nature speaks the truth."

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

“Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me ---”

(Habakkuk 1:3)

What a grievous time it is! Burglary and theft is greatly increased, to the torment and grief of those who suffer from such vile dishonesty. Yet governments seem to be incapable of dealing with such evil, or do not care sufficiently for their suffering peoples to deal radically with villains who stalk the land, looking for victims for their avarice.

For millions of people the main fear at the present time is not about war between nations, but whether the burglar will visit them when they are away from home, or whether members of their families will be attacked in the streets, particularly at night.

Recently lawyers and officials and also police representatives from 120 countries gathered for a United Nations Congress on crime prevention, and what to do with perpetrators when they are caught. It is a great problem for them, because crime has been increasing at about 5 per cent a year.

One of the worries for international communities is world wide alliances between the large criminal gangs such as triads (originating in the East) and the Mafia. A United Nations spokesman (of the U.N. Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch) has declared that no one is immune from crime. The concern is to make sure existing commitments are put into action, as a priority, before any new initiatives. This is virtually an admission of failure to deal effectively with the evil in keeping with prescribed law.

Criminals are amassing a great deal of wealth, moving their ill gotten gains from country to country by means of the new electronic methods of money dealing. These gangs are building up their wealth much more quickly than large corporations and banks. It is even thought that these gangsters that become even more powerful by money laundering are getting to the position of being able to influence some national economies because of the vast funds they have at their disposal.

It is suspected that a very large amount of cash recently used to buy banks that have been privatised came from illegal sources. Russia is an example of deterioration of honesty. Since Communism's demise, which for all its failures gripped its financial world in a tight control, there has been a 25 per cent reduction in industrial production etc., and yet the aggregate personal income has risen by 10 per cent, indicating “underground” criminal economic activity.

How eloquently the ancient prophecy speaks of this evil time. "Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me." We see these things as a fulfilment for these last days indicating that the great day of change is near. The day of God's intervention to put right what man is unable to do.

How apt is the prophet's appeal: "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?" The answer of the Spirit is: - - - the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Habakkuk 2:14)

