

OCTOBER 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"

"AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD"

"LEGION"

"BELIEF AND BAPTISM (from the Christadelphian)"

"A BIBLE CLASS"

"LET NO MAN SEEK HIS OWN"

**"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,
146 Gardner Street,
Fredonia,
New York 14063
U.S.A.

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD
AT MOUNT ABARIM

Some 3500 years ago, the Almighty spoke these meaningful words to Moses, His servant:

“... Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel.”

Numbers 27:12.

Abarim is a range of mountains just east of the Dead Sea and the river Jordan, from which the land of Canaan is clearly visible. In this range are Mount Nebo, Mount Pisgah and Mount Peor. This area had an important part in events involving Moses and Israel. After Israel, under Moses, had conquered Sihon king of the Amorites and Og king of Bashan, in their march toward their promised inheritance, they finally came to the plains of Moab at the foot of the Abarim range:

“And the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in the plains of Moab on this (eastern) side of Jordan by Jericho.”

Numbers 22:1.

God’s people were about to enter the land of Canaan, as their forty years in the wilderness were nearly at an end. While they camped in these plains near the Dead Sea, Balak king of Moab grew fearful as he considered their decisive victory over Sihon and Og, and perceived the multitude which constituted Israel—over 600,000 fighting men. Apprehensively the king hired the so-called prophet, Balaam, to curse Israel, saying to him:

“... Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them: ... and curse me them from thence.

And he brought him into the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah....”

Numbers 23:13-14.

On Pisgah, part of the range of Abarim, Balaam looked upon Israel camped below, and under God’s directive hand he blessed Israel rather than cursed them. Balak, provoked at Balaam’s refusal to curse them, took him to another mount, saying:

“... Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place, peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence.

And Balak brought Balaam unto the top of Peor, that looketh toward Jeshimon.”

Numbers 23:27-28.

Here Balaam, realizing that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel:

“... set his face toward the wilderness.

And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the spirit of God came upon him.”
Numbers 24:1-2.

There, before his eyes, was Israel—probably two or three million people—camped about the tabernacle, upon which the pillar of cloud would be resting, and the smoke of the altar would ascend toward the heavens. They were resting in their tents because the cloud rested. When Balaam saw the vastness of Israel’s camp, God caused him to exclaim in awe:

“How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!”
Numbers 24:5.

From this mount, Balaam was again compelled to bless as he saw the camp of Israel arranged in “goodly” pattern, given of God. It was a sight to cause wonder, and Balaam was compelled to further prophesy concerning God’s purpose:

“... there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel...
Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion....”
Numbers 24:17,19.

With these words, God’s purpose was revealed, to be accomplished through the Anointed One of Jacob, the ruler out of Judah (Jesus). Thus Balaam was prevented from cursing Israel, for the Lord’s purpose was clear: to bless them through the “hope of Israel”, a kingdom and a king to endure for ever.

While these events were taking place, Israel was camped in the plain below Pisgah and Peor, waiting for the cloud to move so that they could continue their journey toward the promised inheritance—now so very near. Israel remained, abiding in their tents at God’s direction. What did they do while so resting?

“... and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab ... and bowed down to their gods.
And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.”

Numbers 25:1-3.

As a result of this idolatry, God in wrath destroyed twenty-four thousand Israelites with a plague (Verse 9). Although, as we have seen, Balaam was not allowed to curse Israel, they themselves occasioned God’s anger, and so evil fell upon them. God was not pleased, His people were not “goodly”. But He did not desert them, instructing Moses:

“Vex the Midianites (allied with Balak) and smite them:

For they vex you with their wives, wherewith they have beguiled you...." Numbers 25:17-18.

Shortly, Israel did smite them at God's command:

"And they warred against the Midianites, as the LORD commanded Moses;...

And they slew the kings of Midian ... Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword." Numbers 31:7-8.

God was with His people, with Moses, holding them responsible, severely chastening, yet showing mercy to those who had not run:

"... greedily after the error of Balaam...." Jude 11.

This running greedily tells us they were going "pell-mell" in the pursuit of satisfying the flesh's desires, instead of abiding in their tents, awaiting God's indication. They rushed "to commit whoredoms with the daughters of Moab"—the very people whose king had sought to curse them and do them great harm!

Is this not an admonition for ourselves, Brethren and Sisters? We are to "abide" in our tents, strangers and pilgrims, waiting for the will of our Father as to how and when we should move, as we continue our labor toward the promised inheritance. His children must keep themselves "holy unto the Lord"—in the world but not joined with it in its greedily running after the things which please "self". This takes a restraint of that "self" in patient waiting upon Him to reveal and direct our steps.

As Jesus' return to establish the promised kingdom seems close at hand, let us work and wait, trusting, abiding under His life-giving commandments, in subjection to His will.

Let us go back to those mountains of Abarim. They were also of great import in the life of Moses. We have listened to God's words this morning as He directed him:

"... Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel.

And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered."

Numbers 27:12-13.

Moses was soon to die, as Aaron already had done. They had rebelled against God at the waters of Meribah, failing to sanctify the Almighty before His people as they in anger at Israel's complaints responded: "Must we fetch you water out of this rock?" (Numbers 20:10) Now, so near the end of his wandering, as Moses stood upon the mountain, he could see his people abiding in their tents, and

beyond the river he could see the land promised to Abraham and his seed. Up to this point, Moses had not seen the land toward which he had led Israel for forty long years, suffering their murmurings, accusations, and stiff-neckedness. Now he could at last look upon it but could not lead his people into it. He would feel sorrow indeed, but would realize that the Almighty was just because of his own grievous failure. This faithful man was about 120 years old as he stood on the mount. Contemplating his earlier life, we see that for forty years he had lived in Pharaoh's house, educated in the wisdom of Egypt by Pharaoh's daughter, and yet early on he was nurtured in the right ways by his mother. Overseen certainly by God, he grew thereby to value God's word, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" Hebrews 11:25. As a result, Moses was in exile in Midian for forty years until an angel spoke to him out of the burning bush, directing him to go back to Egypt for the purpose of leading his people out of bondage. Moses, a lowly Israelite, brought the word of God to Pharaoh and against the might and power of Egypt, ultimately leading Israel out after God plagued Egypt, destroying Pharaoh and his army. For another long and arduous forty years, Moses led his people wandering through the wilderness as a result of their failure to trust in God at Kadesh-Barnea. Now close to the end of these long years, he was commanded to go up Mount Abarim and view the land which was ever in his heart and hope, but which he had never seen. He had endured his life-long time of severe trials, painful tribulation, and of offering faithful, loving service, except for Meribah. He could have felt this loss of entering was unfair. He was told to go up the mount, see the land, and then his life would end there. What did he do? His spirit is revealed for us as he prayed:

"Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation,
Which ... may lead them ... that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd."

Numbers 27:16-17.

Was his concern for his own loss? NO! He thought first of his people and for their continued care and well being in God's service. His heart was fully involved. The Almighty responded:

"... Take thee Joshua ... a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him;
... and give him a charge in their sight."

Numbers 27:18-19.

Joshua had been with Moses very early upon Mount Sinai, and had fought later against Amalek in a great battle, so prolonged

that the hands of Moses needed to be supported by Aaron and Hur. Joshua, along with Caleb at Kadesh-Barnea, urged Israel to go up into the land, certain that the Lord would go with them to conquer the giants and the walled cities. Moses might have chosen Joshua himself, for he was the logical choice; but no, he turned to God: "Let the LORD ... set a man over the congregation." Joshua was selected by the Almighty, and Moses in obedience:

"... laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the LORD commanded...." Numbers 27:23.

As he contemplated what God purposed for him now at the age of 120 years, Moses was content, yielding wholly to the Almighty's judgment, acknowledging its rightness. He had now seen the good land, he was certain that Joshua was the right leader for Israel, and he rested in faith concerning God's greater purpose to be accomplished in His Son, the Lord Jesus (Joshua in Hebrew). About to yield up his life, Moses perceiving this, was moved to bless Israel:

"There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun (symbolic name for Israel)

The eternal God is thy refuge ... he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.

Israel then shall dwell in safety alone: ...

Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." Deuteronomy 33:26-29.

This was Moses' trust and bulwark, sustaining him in all his years of tribulation and responsibility. Yet he knew a fervent hope and great joy.

Can this not be our trust and joy, Brethren and Sisters, in these last days? We believe Jesus will soon return and will lead those whom He will have judged faithful in the work of cleansing the earth, in the process of establishing His kingdom. Let us determine to "abide" in our tents, putting away the distractions for which we may yearn. For they can lead our minds away from that willing, hopeful service, in waiting upon the Almighty, which is a pleasure to Him. He has provided Jesus as our Joshua to lead us into that inheritance. We look to the faithful Shepherd whom God has provided, as He did in answer to Moses' prayer:

"Let the LORD ... set a man over the congregation ... that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd." Numbers 27:16-17.

J.A.DeF.

LEGION

In the gospel of Mark we follow the Lord Jesus during His ministry, preaching the good news of the kingdom of God and healing the sick through the miraculous power of the Spirit, bestowed upon Him as the One promised to fulfill God's purpose. As He travelled about preaching to the multitudes, He often used the present circumstances to further His teaching.

One such occasion involved a man possessed of a violent mental infirmity, whom He encountered upon entering the country of the Gadarenes:

"And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:

Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him.

And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not." Mark 5:2-7.

Here was one so shackled by infirmity and mental torment that he called himself "Legion"—feeling possessed of many personalities or "demons". The Lord Jesus, moved with compassion for his condition, healed him with only a few words:

"Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit." Mark 5:8.

He removed Legion's mental infirmity by the power of His word alone—casting this illness into a herd of swine which then drowned themselves in the sea. We may well imagine the skepticism when the news of his healing was relayed by the swine's caretakers, who had witnessed this miraculous event:

"And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done." Mark 5:14.

When a crowd came to judge this event for themselves, they witnessed something wondrous and amazing:

“And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

And they that saw it told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine.

And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.”

Mark 5:15-17.

They were afraid when they saw what Jesus' power had done for Legion. Of course Jesus had no desire to frighten, but rather to impress upon them the wondrous power of the almighty bestowed in His Son, that they might repent and believe. Perhaps in this case, this special miracle had more to do with that individual man called Legion, for after he had been healed he sought to follow the Lord Jesus as a disciple:

“And when he (Jesus) was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.

Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.”

Mark 5:18-19.

As Legion returned to his family, how amazed they and all who knew him would be to see the great change that had occurred. He was told to show the things done for him through the Lord's mercy and compassion, and as instructed he:

“began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel”.

Mark 5:20.

The word “Decapolis” is used to describe a region of ten cities and so Legion, true to his charge from the Lord, travelled throughout the area, retelling the account of his miraculous healing through God's power in His Son. Who knows how many he may have touched with his stirring message, causing them to turn to God in a search for Truth?

At another time, Jesus mercifully cured an impotent man who waited by the pool of Bethesda where it was believed miracles occurred:

“Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.” John 5:2-4.

Here lay a man crippled for 38 years, who vainly struggled to lower himself into the pool, but because of his infirmity, was never the first to reach the water. Jesus seeing him had compassion and said:

“Wilt thou be made whole?—Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.” John 5:6, 8-9.

Because He had healed on the sabbath day, the Jews who did not share His feelings of compassion for the poor and maimed, and incensed by His claim as the Son of God, “sought the more to kill him”. In answer, He explained the source of His power:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.” John 5:19-20.

How sad that so few did marvel or believe—especially those who were so well versed in the Law and prophecies concerning His coming.

In contrast we read again the stirring record of Legion, one considered incurable by the world, but who when released from the grip of his mental infirmity went on to praise and glorify God and His Son, with a diligent witness in gratitude for the great mercy he had received.

Let us be strengthened and spiritually renewed by this inspiring account, lest we too forget to marvel or fail to display a grateful heart for the constant care extended by a loving Father to those who endeavor to serve Him with their living.

M.C.S.

BELIEF AND BAPTISM (from the Christadelphian)

(Question) Are you right in not acknowledging as brethren those who, while accepting Jesus as their Saviour, do not understand the scriptures from a Christadelphian standpoint? How can you be so sure that your understanding is correct, and the beliefs of others are wrong?

(Extract from answer to above) First, there must be no doubt that who is, or who is not acceptable to Christ will only be decided by him when those who are raised stand before his judgment seat - - -. We cannot presume to say specifically who he will accept, though we can be assured that those who have not sought covenant relationship with him will be rejected - - -. Does the fact that we do not know precisely the Master's mind in this area mean that we are not to show any discernment at all in who we recognise as our brethren and sisters in Christ? Of course not! It would be an affront to our Lord if we did not seek to understand and apply his teachings diligently.

As we know, "he that believeth and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16). After hearing Peter's speech at Pentecost in Jerusalem, "They that gladly received his word were baptized: and - - - they continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:41-42). These simple straightforward scriptures show plainly the connection between the faithful baptism of a person believing what Jesus and the Apostles taught, and entry into the community of believers. As these verses are so explicit - - - the scriptures themselves explain the basis of true Christian brotherhood. Nowhere in the New Testament do we find anyone being called "brother" who has not first been baptized following belief of "the apostles' doctrine" - - -.

There are thus two related conditions—and only two—for entry into the body of believers: belief and baptism. One cannot claim to believe without specifying exactly what is believed. - - - The same is true with baptism. As this is intended to show our need to be associated with the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Bible only refers to the total immersion of adult believers: "We are buried with him by baptisms into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead - - - so we also should walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:4). The question therefore is not whether someone believes the Scriptures from a Christadelphian standpoint, but whether he believes the plain teaching of the Bible on the important issues of "the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 8:12). These subjects are adequately explained in simple language. All who believe and act upon them faithfully are "brethren".

The Remnant's comments on the above

It may be that the "Remnant" has misunderstood what the

writer of the above really means. But we believe that fellowship is a very important aspect of the Truth and of the Kingdom of God. God who rules in the kingdoms of men has given understanding to some through His Holy Word. Those who are so blessed have the duty to convey that Truth to any whom God in His Supreme Wisdom chooses to call to His Fellowship. The Apostle Paul was clear about this duty:-

“--- I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

And to make all - - - see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:”

Ephesians 3:7-9

Paul did not receive his understanding by a capable reading of the word of God, though he was well versed in scripture. But rather by the divine work of sending a brother of Christ, namely Ananias, who told him what he should do. Paul was then blessed with fellowship as well as understanding at one and the same time. This was a very essential aspect before he could become a brother of Christ.

The Apostle John also refers to this fellowship when he says:-

“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

1 John 1:3.

If fellowship in the Truth is not understood, then the understanding is incomplete. The purpose of God when calling some to His Truth, is that they are called to those who already have His Truth with which He has blessed them. Thus the oneness of the Body of Christ is ensured. Jesus declared:-

“- - - there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.” John 10.16.

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me THROUGH THEIR WORD:

That they all may be one; as thou, Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us:” John 17:20-21.

This oneness, which is fellowship, is also witnessed in the following:-

”There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;
One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

Ephesians 4:4-6.

The Remnant believes that this is a necessary part of understanding the Truth, and that any who though saying they accept Jesus as their Saviour, are not in fellowship with the “one body”, cannot truly be acknowledged by those who are.

Dr. John Thomas 1835 (on belief and baptism)

(Question) How are we raised with Christ in Baptism—is it by the abstract act of emergence from the water after submersion?

(Answer) No; we are raised with Christ in Baptism, “THROUGH THE BELIEF of the strong working of God, who raised him from the dead.” (Col.2:12). That Jesus is the Christ can only be believed as true by a belief of the testimony of the Holy Spirit contained in the sacred Scriptures. The belief of the Resurrection of the Christ depends upon the same testimony. It is necessary that that testimony be of the strongest character; for the fact is contrary to all human experience since the days of the Apostles. It may be ASSENTED TO as a matter of convenience, or otherwise, but it cannot be BELIEVED without such divine testimony, and that too confirmed by MIRACLES. To test a person’s belief of this astounding fact it is only necessary to demand his proofs. If he cannot adduce divine testimony, that is, the testimony of Apostles and Prophets, he cannot, he does not, believe it. Prophetic testimony is necessary to show, that the King, whom Jehovah would Anoint, was to suffer death as a propitiation for iniquity, and afterwards to rise from the dead; Apostolic, that Jesus was that Anointed King, and that He rose from the dead according to the Scriptures. There are certain axiomata, or first principles, adopted by “Reformers” which are immutably and eternally true. First, that FAITH IS THE BELIEF OF TESTIMONY; secondly that WHERE THERE IS NO TESTIMONY THERE CAN BE NO FAITH. We say then, let “reformers” be consistent; let them not fear to face the inevitable conclusions of the premises they have adopted. In this age of the Apostacy men do not search the Scriptures, for the simple reason, that they do not think to obtain by them, eternal life. The men and women of this day are either masked or overt infidels; and if the former, surrendering themselves body, soul, spirit, understanding, and judgment—nay, even their eternal destinies into the hands of

clerical conscience-keepers; their souls are bartered for gain by these spiritual merchants, who teach them to esteem the Holy Scriptures as a dead letter which kills them, although they inculcate their total depravity, and stoney deadness; they rarely, if ever, attempt to prove the Resurrection of Jesus, because, say they, "everbody knows that;" and thus they discourage the people from searching the Scriptures:—seeing that this is the fact,—a fact proved by the observation of every first Day's ministrations in the Temples of Antichrist; by social intercourse from day to day with "professors of religion"—how is it possible that "reformers" can admit the allegation, in the very teeth of their own principles, that the faith of the people is true and genuine, that is, the belief of Apostolic and Prophetic testimony? all Christendom, from the Pope to the grave-digger, assents to this great fact; but will "reformers" say they believe with 'faith unfeigned'? The assent of Christendom is credulity, or FAITH WITHOUT TESTIMONY, if I may be permitted the solecism. Our INFERENCE is this, that the vast mass of all the "Denominations", and a great majority of the Baptist Sect, since the introduction of religious rioting in all its puerile, ridiculous, and antichristian forms among them; which said clerical devices and inventions have superseded, and silenced the testimony of God for the most part—the former, we infer, are superstitious and credulous; and the latter, although immersed, have not been raised with Christ in Baptism, THROUGH THE BELIEF of the strong working of God, who raised him from the dead; and are, therefore, unjustified, unreconciled, unadopted, unpardoned, not saved. The APPLICATION of our inference is this—that none ought to be admitted into a community, professing to be based upon the testimony of Apostles and Prophets, Jesus the Christ, the foundation corner stone, unless they (having been previously to application for admission immersed—revival-made—Baptists only) be reimmersed upon an intelligent confession of THE truth. Strange to tell, there are those who admit our premises, nay, even our inference, but from fear of the world, or of hard names, or some other imaginary evil, start with the utmost repugnance from the application!

A BIBLE CLASS

“The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them.” (Proverbs 12:26)

In considering these words of Solomon, we may ask what is meant by the righteous being “more excellent” than his neighbour? This is the only place in the scriptures where this word meaning, to meander, search or to seek is used as “excellent”. To search or seek makes us think of the twelve spies sent to search out the promised land and bring back a report to the rest of Israel:

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a ruler among them.”

Numbers 13:1-2.

This was a great work and responsibility, yet we remember how ten of the spies brought back an evil report, instilling fear into the congregation because of the presence of walled cities and giants - the sons of Anak. Yet two spies, Joshua and Caleb saw the same growing bounty, walled cities and giant inhabitants, yet because of their faith in God, looked at the situation differently—with spirit eyes, encouraging their brethren to put away their doubts and fears:

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

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

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

Numbers 14:7-9.

However, the ten unfaithful spies “seduced” Israel to rebel by instilling fear and doubt in God’s power to provide as He had promised—just as the latter part of our verse under consideration explains:

“... but the way of the wicked seduceth them.”

Proverbs 12:26.

Instead of conquering the land in a matter of days, armed with God’s help and power, they were denied entrance, and for their lack of trust were sentenced to wander forty years in the wilderness. Joshua and Caleb, unlike the other spies, believed in the promises

to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that God would give them this land and so they were not dismayed by the physical barriers feared by the others. In spite of God's presence in the pillar of cloud and fire which accompanied them throughout their journey, the congregation of Israel did not feel it possible to conquer the land because of the ten spies' evil report. The rebellious looked at this situation with eyes of the flesh, while Caleb and Joshua saw with the eyes of the spirit, proving they were "more excellent" or spiritually searching in God's sight than their brethren.

Moving now to the New Testament, Paul and Silas during their ministry, found at Berea a group of devout Jews who, after hearing the gospel preached by these two brethren, searched the scriptures to prove their testimony. Because of their willingness to seek out and study God's word, many believed in the gospel and the name of Jesus Christ:

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few."

Acts 17:11-12.

How clearly the righteous ones showed forth their "more excellent" ways.

The latter part of our verse in Proverbs says, "the way of the wicked seduceth them". This word "seduceth" means to wander out of the way, to reel or to stagger, giving the thought of an unsteady walk—one wandering away from the straight and narrow path, into whatever areas his flesh leads. Such an example is seen in Manasseh, an evil king of Judah, who because of his wickedness and idolatry, seduced Israel away from serving God, for the scriptures record that he:

"... built up again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.

And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger ... and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel."

II Kings 21:3,6,9.

Through the study of our verse under consideration, we learn that the "righteous is more excellent than his neighbour" because he diligently searches out the scriptures to know the ways of God. Constantly seeking spiritual strength in order to walk in His ways, he recognizes the weakness of his mortal frame and how easily he can be seduced away from the straight and narrow path that leads to eternal life. Therefore he strives, with God's help, to order his ways according to the desires of the Father in heaven, and in faith hopes for His approval.

M.C.S.

"LET NO MAN SEEK HIS OWN"

I Corinthians 10:24.

Paul, in writing to his brethren in Corinth, sought to help them in practical things as well as spiritual. He spoke of Israel in the wilderness, reminding that God was not well pleased with them (Verse 5), and as a result they were overthrown in that desert place. Using their circumstances, he wrote:

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." I Corinthians 10:11.

An admonition is bringing something of import to the mind for correction or to warn. Paul cautioned his brethren through the example of Israel as he continued:

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

I Corinthians 10:12-13.

The Almighty in mercy does not require of His children more than they are capable of, and will sustain in trial those who in love have desired to honor Him by obedience to His word. Paul goes on, telling of his determination because of his love for God and His people:

"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not."

I Corinthians 10:23.

Lawful consists of two words, giving the thought of direction from the one who is; that is, from the mind of God Himself. The Almighty's words then allow certain freedoms but, as Paul tells us,

Almighty's words then allow certain freedoms but, as Paul tells us, to those who love Him and His people, there are other considerations to be kept in mind. In addition to being lawful, is what we want to do expedient? Does it edify? Expedient implies better for, profitable to another; while edify involves a building, as with an edifice or a house. Where there is love for God, for His people, and His house, certain things gratifying to self may be quite lawful, but love would make one stop and think: Will it be better for my brethren and sisters? Will it help to build up His house? If so, it is acceptable to go ahead carefully, but if it might cause offence, hurt, or be a stumbling block, it could not edify the house; then one would deny self in love and for the benefit of all. Paul puts this into clear perception:

"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth."
I Corinthians 10:24.

In the context, we can clearly see Paul's admonition: Do not seek that which, though lawful, may be profitable only to self but rather, moved by love, do only those upbuilding things which are of benefit and profit to God's people. Paul leaves no doubt that we may understand the motive for this care, speaking of the true love among brethren and sisters:

"Love ... doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil."

I Corinthians 13:5.

The scriptures are filled with strengthening admonition concerning the neglect of others because of insufficient thought or concern. In the law, the Almighty directed Israel:

"... when ye reap the harvest ... thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings....

And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape.... thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God." Leviticus 19:9-10.

How the greedy man might deplore this "waste"! But the spirit of the law was as Jesus expressed it in answer to the lawyer's question:

"Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

... Thou shalt love the Lord thy God ...

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."
Matthew 22:36-40.

He also helped Peter and the disciples to perceive and grow in this spirit:

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

The Lord Jesus did not seek His own, but His brethren’s spiritual growth and gain.

Are we not thereby helped to apply this spirit to our daily lives? This is pleasing to God, whether in practical ways or spiritual:

“Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:
Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.”
I Corinthians 10:32-33.

Being flesh, we all have wants, desires, which though lawful may not edify nor be expedient in certain circumstances. How grateful we should be to Paul, and above all to our Father for the help given in avoiding that which would give offence, or worse, prove a temptation to others. Let us nourish that love for one another, not ever seeking for our own wants, but ever alert for that which in all ways gives gain to others.

J.A.DeF.

Signs of His Coming and of the End of the World

“--- upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity ---”
(Luke 21:25)

It is now 50 years since the atom bomb was dropped upon Japan, and though there has been much warfare since the end of World War 2, the atom bomb has not been used in conflict since those explosions on Hiroshima and Nagasaki; because of the consequences for everyone.

The atomic age began to develop a hundred years ago when Wilhelm Roentgen discovered the power of radiation. From this scientific finding x-rays developed, and a number of minor commercial usages as well as a considerable move forward in medical treatments. It was only at a somewhat later time that the dangers of radiation were fully realised. The damage to Radium Dial painters in a United States watch factory eventually made an impression; and sixty years later the ground on which the watch factory was built, and the graves of the women who painted the watches are still radio-active.

The development of the atom bomb really began in 1938 when Albert Einstein wrote to United States President Franklin Roosevelt warning that Nazi Germany could be trying to produce an atomic bomb. By October 1941 Britain and America had agreed to join in scientific research to develop such a weapon. It was called the Manhattan Project, and was to be enormously costly. Dr. Robert Oppenheimer was put in charge of the undertaking, and two types of bomb were developed. The one exploded over Hiroshima was a uranium device, the one unleashed on Nagasaki was powered by plutonium. The devastation produced on Japan was horrendous. There were four fatal aspects to the explosions. First, there was an intense flash when the bomb went critical; anyone looking in the direction of the explosion was blinded temporarily within 90 miles. The second factor was the blast covering 1 mile in 3 seconds, flattening everything in its path, with a wind of 180 miles per hour. The third effect was the intense heat, as great as that at the centre of the sun, vaporising everything within a three mile circle. And then there was the fallout, the initial pulse being a cloud 12 miles high, with secondary radiation from dust carried over a very great distance.

The war, of course, quickly came to an end after the atomic attack on Japan. And then the excuses began for this dreadful invention. The atomic development would be the means of producing cheap energy for the nations; and wielding such a power would have the effect of deterring warfare. Of course the outcome was different from the hopes expressed. It was not cheap power at all because of the costs involved in dealing with atomic waste pro-

duced from nuclear power stations. Neither was war curbed, except perhaps for the two super-powers Russia and the U.S.A.

Now at the time of writing controversy has again arisen over the French intention of new atomic bomb tests at the Pacific atoll of Mururoa. Australia and New Zealand being particularly alarmed because of their comparatively close proximity to the intended explosions. The fact of the matter is (according to an atomic expert who was involved in the Manhattan Project), "It now seems there is no such thing as a safe dose of radiation."

What then should the nations of the world do? It has been said by the Western Powers, they will never use a nuclear bomb to attack; in fact there has been an endeavour to give the impression that they will never use a nuclear bomb. "Why then have these weapons?" say Nuclear Disarmament Organisations, who are trying to bring about a situation of complete removal of such awesome weapons. The reply to this is, that there is always a possibility of a nation ruled by dictatorship, of acquiring this evil weapon. "So you WOULD be prepared to use it against such" is the retaliatory answer. Again there is a negative reply. The implication being that Western Nations would not be the first to use the bomb. But say other nations, why should certain nations be allowed the bomb, and other nations be denied them? This appears to be the French position who are endeavouring to improve their capability by the Mururoa tests. If the super-Powers were to rid themselves of their stockpiles might not this encourage other nations (such as the French) to also give up the thought of having such things? this is the reasoning put forward by some. The super-Powers however fall back on the argument, "But what if a maverick nation gets its hands upon the Bomb?" So the unresolved dilemma continues. And smaller nations (such as France) go on enhancing their independent nuclear capability, with the certainty that other nations will follow them. Britain also having just enormously increased its nuclear fire-power.

It is the fulfillment of what Christ prophesied, "--- distress of nations, with perplexity ---." There is no way out of the mess and the threat. Only the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this suffering earth can bring about deliverance from the consequences of man's folly.

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

HAMBURG, NEW YORK, Corner Southwestern Blvd. & Pleasant Ave.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m.
 Sunday Afternoon Class 1.45 p.m.
Midweek: Bible Class: Forestville, Hamburg and
 Fredonia
 Alternate Week: Revelation Study

In the kindness of our Father, ecclesial activities continue with particular help for all. The witness to His word brings the occasional concerned inquirer. For these blessings we are grateful along with our "fellows" overseas.

J.A.DeF.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

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

Now that the Autumn is setting in the mind reflects upon the transience of Summer. This reflects upon man's own existence, which surges forward in a metaphorical Spring-time, then quickly turns into a Summer-time—establishing of his days and ways. But the Autumn must come, when the glory fades, and dark days lie ahead.

How wonderful is God's promise that "Winter" need not be the end for man.

It is with the future in mind, of the hope which the Eternal offers, that we continue to circularise the witness of Bible Truth, to bring attention to the things of the Spirit which will never fail.