

MARCH 1996

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"

"AN EVERLASTING SIGN"

"THE WITCH OF ENDOR"

"A BIBLE CLASS"

"AT A FUNERAL"

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

"NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS"

All Communications

D. Lancaster,
227 Moston Lane East,
New Moston,
Manchester M40 3HY,
England.

J. A. DeFries,
146 Gardner Street,
Fredonia,
New York 14063,
U.S.A.

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD
"PRAY FOR THE PEACE OF JERUSALEM"

Our minds have been directed this morning to three momentous periods in the history of Israel's people and Jerusalem. First, in II Kings we are shown the circumstances during Solomon's time; then the events Israel faced in the time of Jeremiah's prophecy; and finally their position as Jesus spoke God's word to them. Let us give careful thought to the varied circumstances involved in each of these diverse situations.

First, the position of Israel during Solomon's reign was probably the high point of her history. Here we must first look at Solomon's father, David, the beloved of God who spoke highly of him, saying "... I have found David ... a man after mine own heart" (Acts 13:22). As a consequence of David's faithfulness, the Almighty's promises were given him: of a house, a son, a kingdom and a throne, all to be forever. The Scriptures call these "the sure mercies of David." Under God's hand and David's rule, Israel conquered surrounding powers until as a nation she encompassed the area from the River of Egypt to the Euphrates. David also prepared for the building of God's house which his son Solomon was to build, accumulating all the materials necessary according to the pattern received from the Almighty. As David realized he was soon to die, he could look back upon his life and rejoice in the blessing of God upon himself, but most especially upon Israel his people.

In partial fulfillment of these divine promises to David, a son was born to Bathsheba:

"... and 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.

At the end of David's forty-year reign, Solomon became king. Because he was faithful, honoring God as did David, God said:

"... Ask what I shall give thee."
I Kings 3:5.

In humility, recognizing his need, Solomon requested:

"Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?"
I Kings 3:9.

Pleasing God, the king was granted that wisdom, and ruled his people with justice and discernment. As a result Israel continued to prosper. Solomon built the house for God, faithfully following the

pattern divinely given to David so that it was "exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries" (I Chron. 22:5). When this work was finished, at the feast (the day of atonement) in the seventh month Ethanim:

"... they brought up the ark of the LORD, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels..."

I Kings 8:4.

When the ark was carefully placed in the most holy:

"... the cloud filled the house of the LORD,
So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD."

I Kings 8:10-11.

Here was a visible symbol of God's presence, a confirmation that the Almighty was indeed dwelling among His people; a blessing, which helped them to prosper in all their doings. The faithful in Israel, as they were allowed to keep the day of atonement, could look forward to the greater Son of David who would come to assemble the eternal house of God, and to rule His kingdom forever.

In this time of rejoicing Solomon prayed:

"That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place.
... hearken thou... hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place:
and when thou hearest, forgive."

I Kings 8:29-30.

Israel's prayers were heard, and under Solomon the nation grew in peace, prestige and power. All this was a witness to the Lord's care for His people as they honored and obeyed Him. Sadly, as time went on, Solomon fell away from God, the Source of his wisdom, to the worship of false gods, influenced by his many pagan wives. Five years after his death, during the reign of his son, Rehoboam, calamity fell.

"... Shishak King of Egypt came up against Jerusalem:
And he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD,
and the treasures of the king's house, he even took away all."

I Kings 14:25-26.

In less than forty years, Israel's peace and glory were gone and the nation divided into two warring factions — all brought about by a turning away from God to the serving of fleshly desires. One might ask: How could they fall into such a foolish course? When Solomon and Israel were subject to God's will they prospered. While under

Solomon their hearts departed from the Almighty, and so His blessing and peace were lost. Is this not a warning for us, Brethren and Sisters? Where is our heart? Is it single in its determination to honor and obey our Father? And then might we wisely ask ourselves: Do we allow our desires or ambitions to dull or supersede our love for God and for His word? Paul reminds us:

“..... they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” I Corinthians 10:11.

And then he added:

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” Verse 12.

Next in our readings we move on to the time of Jeremiah, over four hundred years after Solomon had dedicated the newly-built temple. It was four hundred years of repeated murmuring and rebellion against their God, in spite of the efforts of all His prophets sent to encourage and to warn. We have read this morning of God’s people, now mainly reduced to the tribe of Judah:

“In the ninth year of (king) Zedekiah . . . came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and they besieged it.

And in the eleventh year . . . the city was broken up.”

Jeremiah 39:1-2.

As the Chaldeans conquered Jerusalem they burned the temple, tore down its walls, killed Zedekiah’s sons before his eyes, and then blinded him before taking him and most of Judah captive to Babylon. Israel was no longer at peace, no longer a nation; the times of the Gentiles were beginning. Had God deserted them? As a nation, yes; but His hand was yet working to chasten, bringing His judgments upon His rebellious people. There was still the hope of Israel for those whose hearts turned to Him. Jeremiah was sent as God’s prophet. He had suffered great affliction and sorrows as his people failed to heed his admonition and sought his life. Yet the Almighty provided for him even in the burning of Jerusalem, for Nebuchadrezzar commanded one of his captains concerning the prophet’s welfare:

“Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee.”

Jeremiah 39:12.

What amazing care granted under God’s protecting hand! Let us look at Judah’s situation: Jerusalem destroyed, God’s house burnt, Zedekiah their king blind and captive, his sons killed. This was

utter desolation of all that God had given to David, Solomon and Israel. It would appear that He had forsaken them; had forgotten those promises to David: a son, a house, a throne, a kingdom. But wait! There was still one son in the line of David, Jehoiachin (son of King Josiah), who was taken captive before the end of Jerusalem. Of this man from David's line we read:

“. . . in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin . . . Evil-merodach king of Babylon . . . did lift up the head of Jehoiachin, king of Judah out of prison; . . . and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon.” II Kings 25:27-28.

Concerning Jehoiachin we read in the genealogy of Jesus Christ:

“. . . Josias begat Jechonias . . . about the time they were carried away to Babylon:
And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel;”

Matthew 1:11-12.

How much we find in these two verses as we perceive that the line of David continued through Jehoiachin to the ultimate of God's promise in the birth of Jesus, the son of David. He will sit upon His throne, build His house, and establish His kingdom, thereby granting perfect peace to Jerusalem. Truly God's word is sure and unchangeable, to be accomplished in His time for the blessing of those who, with Jeremiah, in good or bad times, trust His word and look for its fulfillment—the hope of Israel—the peace of Jerusalem.

Lastly we have read in Luke 24 of God's people about six hundred years after the downfall and captivity of Judah and Jerusalem. Still a captive people, they were now subject to Rome. The temple and Jerusalem had been rebuilt, its walls restored, but the people had not changed. They still murmured in rebellion, professing to keep God's law but only in its letter, lacking a loving trust in His provision, as they had become steeped in the “tradition of the elders.” Into this situation Jesus was born. The angel sent to Mary said of the Son soon to come:

“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.” Luke 1:32-33.

Born of Mary through the Holy Spirit, Jesus lived in complete subjection to His Father's will, never sinning, and so perfectly

glorified Him. We have remembered this victory over His flesh nature here this morning. He was rejected by His own people who vindictively cried out to Pilate: "Crucify him." Jesus died and rose again the third day. As He stood among His apostles He spoke:

"... Peace be unto you." Luke 24:36.

To a few who believed on Him, peace was made possible through His offering, the means of atonement promised. Few in Israel received Jesus as their promised Messiah, and so knew no peace. Within forty years, Jerusalem was again devastated by Titus, the Roman General; the temple destroyed, and Jews forbidden to enter their "holy city." What had been a powerful, prosperous, God-fearing nation knowing peace (under Solomon), was made subject to Gentile rule and in ruins.

Today Israel is once again an independent nation, apparently prospering, but living in constant fear, still in danger from its Gentile neighbors. There is an urgent seeking of "peace"; but it seems still far removed. The nation is divided between the ultra-right orthodox faction opposing "peace" with the Arabs, and those who believe compromise is acceptable for the sake of "peace." Their leader in this search for peace has been assassinated, producing more turmoil and uncertainty.

Does not the word of God clearly reveal that there is no peace, safety, nor prospering for mankind unless there is recognition and submission to God's word? We believe that soon the Prince of Peace will return to establish the kingdom promised to David — a rule of perfect justice and righteousness, bringing submission to God, and thus peace. This is our hope, Brethren and Sisters. Let us then fasten our hearts and works upon our Father's word, and join with David in his heart's desire:

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.

Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For thy brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee." Psalm 122:6-8.

J.A.DeF.

AN EVERLASTING SIGN

The record in Ezekiel gives instruction and help, teaching us of the all encompassing power and might of Yahweh — Ruler of all heaven and earth, but who as a loving Father gives signs and wonders to His children to encourage them along the way.

Ezekiel was called to be a watchman to the house of Israel in captivity. His actions were to be meaningful and instructive to the perceptive of heart, for he was a living “sign to the house of Israel” (Ezek. 4:3).

“Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore, hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.”
Ezekiel 3:17.

This prophet was commanded by God to lie on his left side for three hundred and ninety days, then on his right side for forty days, also to eat his food and drink by measure, all these foretelling the judgment to come upon His wayward people. These actions must have seemed bizarre to those observing, yet they were a sign and prophecy of all that would come upon them if they refused to hearken to God’s warning:

“Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight, and with care; and they shall drink water by measure, and with astonishment:

That they may want bread and water, and be astonished one with another, and consume away for their iniquity.”

Ezekiel 4:16-17.

God has given signs throughout the ages as a confirmation of His Word, giving His people assurance and encouragement that these events will unfold. Such a sign was given to Hezekiah, king of Judah. Stricken with a life threatening illness, he was visited by the prophet Isaiah and told to put his house in order and prepare for death:

“In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.”
Isaiah 38:1.

The king cried to God for healing, beseeching Him to remember his faithfulness:

“Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD,
And said, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I

have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore." Isaiah 38:2-3.

God heard his prayer and promised through Isaiah, to restore his health and to grant unto him an additional fifteen years of life. As a token, He assured Hezekiah with a sign:

"Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.

And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city.

And this shall be a sign unto thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken;

Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees by which degrees it was gone down." Isaiah 38:5-8.

The sun retreated ten degrees on the sun dial as a sign to Hezekiah — an impossible circumstance the world might say, yet here the might and power of God as Ruler of all heaven and earth was displayed to assure and comfort, as does a loving Father one of His little ones.

To Noah and his family and descendants, His bow in the sky also was a sign given, that never again would the earth be destroyed by a flood. No doubt after their deliverance from the flood, the first rainfall stirred fear in some, yet with the appearance of the rainbow in the sky, they would be comforted and reassured, remembering His promise.

Those called out are also to be as signs to the world — displaying a lifestyle and attitude that gives praise and honor to Him. David knew himself to be such a sign as he said:

"... thou art my hope, O Lord GOD: thou art my trust from my youth.

By thee have I been holden up from the womb: thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: my praise shall be continually of thee.

I am as a wonder (sign) unto many; but thou art my strong refuge." Psalm 71:5-7.

Certainly David in his many circumstances faced hard trials, becoming a sign and wonder to those who watched. As a youth confronting the giant Goliath, he displayed the wonder of his faith

and trust in God for all who witnessed it.

However, the greatest of all signs, was later revealed by God through His prophet Isaiah saying:

“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.” Isaiah 7:14-15.

This sign foretold the birth of Christ, a light to which the faithful of old would look forward in hope and which we today can confirm from the record of His birth, ministry, death and resurrection. Jesus, was as Ezekiel a living sign, the Word made flesh — the embodiment of God’s goodness and the hope of an escape from death for His people.

In the New Testament we read of those who demanded a sign of the Lord Jesus that he was the Messiah:

“... What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

But he spake of the temple of his body.” John 2:18-21.

Israel still looked for a sign, yet the Lord Jesus was in their midst performing miracles, healing the sick and preaching the gospel as no teacher or prophet had done before.

We are privileged living in the latter days, to see many signs and events unfolding as prophesied — events we feel may soon usher in the Lord Jesus’ return. As we look with longing to the fulfillment of His promises given by signs and wonders over the years, let us lift our heads and be watchful with assurance:

“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” Isaiah 55:11.

These signs should help us to be grateful and subject to the hope set before us, looking in faith and patience, to the joyful time when His kingdom shall be established on earth and all nations will bow before His majesty fulfilling the signs given through His Word:

“For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into

singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

Isaiah 55:12-13.

M.C.S.

THE WITCH OF ENDOR

Recently, a Christadelphian magazine touched upon the above subject, and the following is an extract from the same:-

“The truth of his situation (King Saul’s) had already been revealed to him by the word of God through Samuel in earlier years. He hoped to obtain a more favourable message, and trusted that by divination it would be provided.

What he actually obtained was a confirmatory message from God — from the God who had stated that witchcraft is idolatry, and who instructed His people not to suffer a witch to live. Therefore any theory about what happened at Endor which involves the woman actually using her so-called powers of divination to supply a message from God cannot be true. In that case, God would be both condoning and utilising her idolatrous practices - - -. We can therefore confidently conclude that God’s message did not come through the medium of the woman of Endor. All that she provided was the location where the message was pronounced. Indeed as we have concluded from a careful reading of the passage - - - she was not even present when the conversation took place between Samuel and Saul.

This explains her surprise when, before she had time to voice any incantation, she saw the form of “an old man - - - covered with a mantle.” Whatever skill the woman had as an oracle, using her voice cleverly to convince her patrons that they were hearing the words of a dead relative or comrade, it is apparent that she had never previously produced the image of a living being.

What was it that she saw? Was it actually Samuel, raised from the dead; or was it a vision? This is the area where uncertainty exists. There is no doubt that the message was God’s message, nor that, had Samuel actually been there, he would have spoken the words Saul heard. We must not doubt either that

God could have raised Samuel bodily to present His message to Saul. - - - power was available to raise Samuel's decayed body for the specific purpose of confirming God's word to Saul. But we must also recognise that, before the completion of His written Word, God sometimes revealed His message through visions. It is possible therefore, that what the woman saw was a vision, and this may explain why the woman saw Samuel when Saul at first did not.

It is impossible to be dogmatic on this subject so long as the basic principles of the situation are accepted. We must reject any idea of the woman being used as a channel for God's Word, because her occupation was a denial of His existence, or of the dead being able to interact with the living. The message to Saul thus came, not from Samuel — either bodily resurrected, or in a vision — but actually from God Himself - - - ."

THE REMNANT'S COMMENTS

May we respectfully suggest that the writer, in saying the message was not from Samuel, touches upon an important aspect. The scripture says, "And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?" (1 Samuel 28:15). If then Samuel was not there, but Saul and those with him thought he was, then deception must have been involved.

Furthermore when the medium said, "Whom shall I bring up unto thee?" it is the typical question of the medium, whose job it is to appear to provide a satisfactory response to those who think they can seek unto the dead. The woman crying out and then saying "Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul", is the kind of ploy used in a medium's procedure. This was used to prompt a reaction in Saul, who said, "Be not afraid: for what sawest thou?" Obviously Saul neither saw anything nor heard anything at this stage. Feeling her way as to how to proceed, the woman said, "I saw gods ascending out of the earth" (verse 13); 'gods' the plural of ELOWAHH, being so used, indicates the woman's deception, for, of course, she saw no such thing. When Saul proceeded to ask for a description of what the woman saw, it was easy for her to give an appropriate answer, "An old man cometh up: and he is covered with a mantle." Note the word "cometh" (ALAH; to ascend), again in keeping with what a medium professes to be able to reveal, and was in response to Saul's, "Bring me UP Samuel." The scriptural account goes on to say, "And Saul perceived that it was Samuel" (verse 14). Again the original explains the situation; (perceived;

YADA; understand). The king was duped into thinking it was so, and it would be no problem to conduct a purported conversation from the dead prophet with the king, "using her voice cleverly to convince her patrons that they were hearing the words" of the dead.

As for the purported message from Samuel to Saul, in view of the well known position of Samuel's previous stance towards Saul, anything other than what the witch of Endor pronounced would not have been believed as being a valid communication with the dead.

The scriptural account of what happened at Endor, is how Saul and his companions saw the events of that time. Would God give any credence to witchcraft by introducing, in context with it, a supernatural intervention? But what of the pronouncement that Saul and his army would be defeated? Endor was near Mount Gilboa. To the west lay the great Plain of Esdraelon. Shunem, south of Endor but north of Gilboa was where the Philistine army camped, and was on the edge of the plain and had a spring of water, necessary for the Philistine army. To its west, about twenty four miles from the coast, there was a sudden fall of level eastwards, which visibly separated Esdraelon proper, from the narrower valley sloping towards Jordan (the area of Jezreel). The power of the Philistine presence was therefore obvious for anyone at Endor to behold, as also their confidence in where they placed their encampment. Whereas Saul had to take the higher ground on Mount Gilboa to compensate for his inferior force. The scripture records Saul's desperate position. "And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets." (1 Samuel 28:5-6). Observers at Endor would be well able to calculate Saul's great disadvantage, and the witch of Endor calculated it successfully. A further pointer is also given in the account, in that there was a divine silence over Saul's dilemma, not even a word from one of the prophets. Why then would God change, and speak in the presence of a medium, and by it appear to speak through what was represented to be the dead Samuel, and so break the divine silence?

No, the account is the account as Saul and his companions saw the events in Endor, in their distraught state. It is the story of the deceit of a successful medium. And superstitious Jews have erroneously believed in the Witch's supernatural abilities over the centuries of time. Hence Josephus' account as follows:-

"--- He bade her bring up to him the soul of Samuel. She not knowing who Samuel was, called him out of Hades. When he appeared and the woman saw one that was venerable, and of a divine form, she was in disorder, and, being astonished at the sight, she said,—"Art not thou king Saul?" for Samuel had informed her who he was. When he had owned that to be true, and had asked her whence her disorder arose, she said, That she saw a certain person ascend, who in his form was like to a god. And when he bid her tell him what he resembled, in what habit he appeared, and of what age he was, she told him he was an old man already, and of a glorious personage, and had on a sacerdotal mantle. So the king discovered by these signs that he was Samuel; and he fell down upon the ground, and saluted, and worshipped him. And when the soul of Samuel asked him why he had disturbed him and caused him to be brought up, he lamented the necessity he was under; for he said, That his enemies pressed heavily upon him: that he was in distress what to do in his present circumstances; that he was forsaken of God, and could obtain no prediction of what was coming, neither by prophets nor by dreams; and that "these were the reasons why I have recourse to thee, who always tookest care of me." But Samuel, seeing that the end of Saul's life was come, said — "It is vain for thee to desire to learn of me anything further, when God hath forsaken thee: however, hear what I say, that David is to be king, and to finish this war with good success; and thou art to lose thy dominion and thy life ---."

So Saul was deceived, and deserved to be. The pronouncement of the witch was not an optimistic one, because she shrewdly calculated that she could not give an optimistic message. But because Saul had sought to such a personage he gave a degree of credibility to this evil belief which has persisted amongst the Jews, and because of it he has been rightly condemned for seeking an answer of Truth from such a source. The counsel of Moses concerning such predictions from false prophets is explicit:-

"There shall not be found among you any one--- that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or necromancer.

THE REMNANT

For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD ---." (Deuteronomy 18:10-12).

"If there arise among you --- a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder,

And the sign or the wonder come to pass ---.

Thou shalt not hearken --- for the Lord your God proveth you ---." (Deuteronomy 13:1-3).

The pertinent question then is, would God who cut off Saul for seeking help from witchcraft, utilise that same situation which the Spirit had always condemned, to convey a message of the Spirit? We think not.

The woman, a possible Philistine sympathiser from whom she obtained her living, pronounced, as though through Samuel, what she had not dared to propagate as from herself.

A BIBLE CLASS
"TARRY ONE FOR ANOTHER"
I Corinthians 11:33

In the consideration of our subject it is helpful to know the background for Paul's words. He was warning his brethren:

"Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse."

I Corinthians 11:17.

Paul's concern and admonition involved their "coming together" — meeting at the Lord's table in a manner not pleasing to God. He explains:

"For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat (margin - ye cannot eat) the Lord's supper."

I Corinthians 11:18-20.

There was lack of unity evidenced by unhealed divisions and uncorrected heresies among those coming to partake of the bread and wine, the Lord's table. With such disunity a true eating of the Lord's supper was not possible, nor would it be acceptable and pleasing to God.

Further, Paul reveals concerning the Corinthians:

"For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

What? have ye not houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not."

I Corinthians 11:21-22.

Here was serious failure to recognize the holiness of the Lord's table, coming to it with a fleshly hunger and thirst, rather than as Jesus taught:

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: . . ."

Matthew 5:6.

What demeaning and despising of the righteousness and selflessness of Jesus, His life and His death as the Victor, must be perceived in the bread and wine. How could there be a true partaking of the Lord's supper with such divisions, heresies and disregard for its holiness? How would Jesus look upon such circumstances? Would there not be sadness and rejection? Would He or His Father

fellowship such emptiness and irreverence? Paul continued (Verses 23-30) helping his brethren to perceive what Jesus' instructions had been for acceptably partaking of the bread and wine, in a way which is perceiving and grateful for so great a blessing. Only then can it be acceptable to the Almighty. He admonished them:

"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."
I Corinthians 11:28-29.

Having clearly reproached those in Corinth concerning their failure to regard the Lord's table in the right manner and with understanding, Paul further admonished them in more faithfully partaking:

"Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come."
I Corinthians 11:33-34.

The apostle recognized his need to "set in order" or correct the disunity and lack of care in their coming together, and would continue to do so in a scriptural manner if his words were not heeded. His appeal was:

". . . when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another."
I Corinthians 11:33.

What did our brother mean? The word "tarry" appears in this verse only, but is also used as to look for, to expect, or to wait. An example or two will help us get the meaning. Paul spoke of Abraham's intense longing for the hope revealed to him through God's promises. It was at the time when he dwelt as a sojourner, in "tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob" that:

". . . he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."
Hebrews 11:10.

He looked in faith, sustained by that promised blessing. It was a patient and watchful waiting on God, longingly anticipating the ultimate fulfillment.

A second use of the word tarry involves a man with an infirmity of thirty-eight years, who, year after year, came to the pool of Bethesda "waiting for the moving of the water" (John 5:3). He with others waited eagerly, hoping to be first in the waters when they moved, and so be healed. We can readily realize how hopefully he waited and with long patience. This particular man could not

move quickly enough to be first; nevertheless, he came year after year. Recognizing his spirit, Jesus spoke: "Wilt thou be made whole?" (Verse 6) Understanding his longing and his effort, He commanded him:

"... Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." John 5:8.

This impotent man's tarrying with hope had his expectation brought about through Jesus' care and understanding. These examples show us how we are to "tarry one for another" — united in a common hope of deliverance, in accordance with God's mercy and grace. Such a tarrying together involves a unity of mind, a love for God, for Jesus, and for each other which transcends all fleshly emotions. John helps us to more fully discern all that this involves:

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." I John 3:16-18.

True love for another involves a giving of self, a doing for each other, a deep feeling of concern and watchfulness for needs, and a willingness to do what will bring each closer in heart to Jesus. Without this unity of understanding and intent, we cannot be pleasing to God nor to His Son. Such, Brethren and Sisters, brings the comprehension and action, as Paul has so wisely advised to:

"... tarry one for another."

Only so may we in that united love for God and each other partake of the Lord's supper with thankfulness and joyful resolve, rightly "discerning the Lord's body." (Verse 29).

J. A.DeF.

AT A FUNERAL

"Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble." "If a man die, shall he live again?" "But man dieth, and wasteth away:" "Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou changest his countenance and sendest him away."

These are the words of God's servant Job, but Job in his sadness had hope!

"I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

God's prophet Ezekiel had a vision of a resurrection. "The Lord - - - set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones - - - ." "There were very many in the open valley; and lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, Hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these; Behold I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:"

The Apostle of Jesus Christ, Paul, posed the question: "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"

In the beginning God raised up man, Adam, from the dust. Why should He not do it again? Yes, He will do it again, as declared in Daniel's prophecy.

"Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life - - - ."

The Lord Jesus Christ declared:- "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

The deceased believed in Jesus Christ; he died in this wonderful hope!

Signs of His Coming and of the End of the World

"The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

And God looked upon the earth and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence - - - ."

(Genesis 6:11-13).

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be - - - ."

(Matthew 24:36-37).

The Crime situation in Britain is getting worse, month by month. Elderly people are afraid to go out by night, and indeed in some areas afraid to go out by day. Yet there are more sophisticated aids for policing than ever before. Police helicopters with heat detection devices so sensitive that the hidden criminal can be detected amongst the fields or woods. Radio communications also enabling rapid response from the forces of law and order. And yet the villainy is not stemmed. How striking have been the comments in the National Press. Concerning a police woman who was battered with a sledge hammer while attempting to stop a gang vandalising her police car. Also referring to a man shot dead and a young man violently killed, all in a matter of three days, the newspaper said:-

"The brutes who attacked them are mindless, vicious vermin who care for nobody and nothing. Yet our nation has become dominated by such revolting creatures. They make us scared to walk down the street. They reduce us to fear in our homes. There have always been violent people. There always will be. But never in our history has there been such an overwhelming number of them.

The greatest challenge that faces Britain as we approach the 21st Century is to stop the Yob Culture."

But as this situation gets worse and worse it is obvious that it is not being stopped. Statistics have been used by Government purported to show a slight improvement, but all too often there is manipulation of the figures for propaganda purposes. The newspaper report paints a grim picture:-

"- - - the under current of terror is stronger than ever.

"Guns and knives are commonplace. Gangs roam the

streets. Drugs and the crime they lead to threaten the fabric of our society.

"Some parts of inner cities are no-go areas. The police hardly bother with what they describe as minor crimes.

"But no burglary is minor for the person whose home is violated. No mugging is minor for the victim.

"It is not the fault of ordinary police officers. They are overwhelmed. Day after day after day they have to deal with violence and the dregs of humanity.

"Teachers are overwhelmed too. In many schools they have given up trying to educate children. The most they can hope for is to control them until the end of the school day."

It is an enormously evil situation. The news writer advocates a solution in the following terms:-

"Each has a part to play. None can shirk its responsibility. It is no good blaming each other. We all have a duty.

"It must start with parents. They must teach their children discipline when they are young and enforce it throughout their teenage years.

"Discipline is the key word, too, for teachers. No child must be allowed to disrupt classes.

"Resources must be provided to single out and deal with children who wreck lessons and turn playgrounds into battlegrounds.

"The police must be given greater resources, as well. There should be more of them. Many more.

"They must never accept that there can be a no-go area. They must never tolerate any breach of the law."

But all this advocacy ends up as meaningless if there is no action to carry out into effect what is desired. Politicians are saying that longer jail sentences are a deterrent. But criminals are not greatly in fear because there are so many crimes that are not even investigated. And as for many of the young people they have no employment or even training, and so have more time and opportunity to be malicious.

So the words of the Lord Jesus Christ have come to pass, "-- as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

HAMBURG, NEW YORK, Corner Southwestern Blvd. and 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

Our hearts and minds are united with our Manchester Brethren in sympathy to our Sister's loss of her husband Brother Geoffrey Butterfield.

In the work of witnessing, the new booklet dealing with the familiar doctrines of today's churches, we hope to have ready for distribution to the general public by the time this is in print, God willing.

J.A.DeF.

MANCHESTER, *Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.*

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

It is our sad duty to report the sudden death of our Brother W. G. Butterfield, on the 5th January, in hospital. It has been a blow to this ecclesia, but each are buoyed up in the sure promise and comfort of Jesus Christ our Lord, that a day is coming when there will be a resurrection for:-

"- - - the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice. And shall come forth - - - ."
(John 5:28-29).

D.L.