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in opposition to the Dogmas of
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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

A TIME TO CONSIDER

As the years roll by, our times and circumstances alter, also our outlook. Under God's hand we are caused to stop and consider that along with trials and testings, even chastenings, there have been blessings and consistent helps in the continued ability to carry on, as well as increase in faith and hope. God is watching, ready to forgive if we falter, and strengthen as we weaken, recognizing our desire to serve Him faithfully. He watches too our response to His hand. Are we willingly subject to Him in the spirit of His Son, whom we have remembered here this morning? Is each one's mind like that of the humble publican going up into the temple to pray, who:

“... standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.”

Luke 18:13.

It is appropriate at times to look back over past months. Have we increased in spirit? Possibly are we a bit more pleasing to Him than a few months ago? It is also fitting to take note of our present circumstances. What can be done to serve Him better, for we may perceive areas where there have not been the changes we would desire. Should we also now look forward? What will the future hold for us? All around we perceive dissatisfaction as many are less than happy. But what is it that brings happiness? To the flesh, it is material things, interesting friends, a good job and pleasant experiences. But, Brethren and Sisters, do we not have a different outlook and a surer hope? Do we not await the return of Jesus to accomplish His Father's purpose with the earth? This must be kept in mind. Although we wait and watch, He will come unexpectedly, “as a thief in the night” (II Peter 3:10). So let us ask ourselves searchingly, Are we ready? Are there things which would be done if we knew His arrival time? Our minds go to the parable of the ten virgins; five wisely had oil in their lamps. All ten looked and waited for the bridegroom. When the cry came, all arose and trimmed (set in order) their lamps. Those who were foolishly unprepared found that they had no oil, while the lamps of the wise, being full of oil, were ready to shine forth. These five were thinking ahead, knowing He would come and doing all possible to be “ready”. At the last minute, the others rushed to buy oil, but it was too late:

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“... while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.”

Matthew 25:10.

Never will we be truly “ready”; however, our time, our efforts and our thinking can be alive and expecting our Lord Jesus’ coming to gather to Himself those who, in love, have prepared themselves to be “. . . as a bride adorned for her husband” (Revelations 21:2). Human minds easily can be taken up with today’s needs and wants, so that we fail to look to the greater vision of eternal life, free from the flesh, promised to those who wait in loving service to Him. Where can help be found that we may more fully perceive what glory and joy is held out, that we might be part of it? Paul helps us:

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

II Timothy 3:16-17.

Here is our goal! God has told us what He desires. This word perfect gives the thought of new or fresh. Are we not working to nourish the new man of spirit that it may approach to the perfect example of our Mediator and Redeemer? All through the Scripture we find examples of righteous men: Abraham, Moses, David. They lived in hope, yet at times failed grievously and knew forgiveness by the Almighty as he took note of their heart’s desire to truly please Him. To help us grow, He has given His Word, our life-giving nourishment, to sustain the new man of Spirit.

In I Chronicles, we are reading the genealogy of God’s chosen people. Some names are familiar to us, but many we do not recognize or closely associate with the history of God’s people. We may be inclined sometimes to lightly scan these as simply past history. But why has God preserved them? Let us look more closely! Our reading in I Chronicles today gives details of one who:

“... was more honorable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, because I bare him with sorrow. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and “that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! . . .”

I Chronicles 4:9-10.

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Jabez was more honorable than his brethren, yet we are not told how, nor who were his brethren. His mother called him Jabez because she "bare him with sorrow". What was in her mind? What was she telling us? She would remember God's sentence upon Eve who with Adam disobeyed God:

"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and they conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; . . ."

Genesis 3:16.

She was mindful of God's sentence and the reason for it. Each child conceived would be born a dying creature because of sin. As a child, Jabez may have asked why he was so named, and his mother would have taught him what brought sorrow to her. As Jabez learned and grew to honor God, he prayed;

". . . that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me!"

I Chronicles 4:10.

Our brother knew from his own experience how prone to evil man is, and sought strength to resist it, and for forgiveness when he failed, ". . . that it may not grieve me (cause sorrow)! And God granted him that which he requested." Jabez acknowledged his frailty and earnestly sought the Almighty's help, without which he and all men fail. May we then strive for the spirit of Jabez, lest we be "grieved" when Jesus returns.

Let us look again to our recent reading in Ezekiel 24. It was a time of sadness for the prophet as he was a captive in Babylon along with others of Judah, here he prophesied under God's hand of the soon and fiery destruction of Jerusalem and of Judah's seventy years' captivity. He was a sign to his people, enduring grievous trial of hardship and loss for himself as God had said:

"Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall they tears run down.

Forbear to cry, make no mourning for the dead . . .

So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died; and I did in the morning as I was commanded."

Ezekiel 24:16-18.

What dreadful sorrow our brother would feel as his beloved was so soon taken from him, as a sign that God would soon take Jerusalem, the desire of their eyes:

". . . Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will profane my

sanctuary, the excellency of your strength, the desire of your eyes, and that which your soul pitieth; and your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword.

And ye shall do as I have done:

... ye shall not mourn nor weep; but ye shall pine away for your iniquities ..."

Ezekiel 24:21-23.

Pining tells of a consuming away to nothing, just as Jerusalem and Judah would shortly do through Nebuchadrezzar's siege and destruction. Ezekiel would be sorely grieved at this, Yet, accepting God's will, he would be sustained by the sure promise of a future when Israel would again be a nation, ruled over by the Son of God. Indeed, in kindness God revealed to His prophet and to His faithful people (and for us) the vision of his kingdom with its temple and city, from which His law will go forth to all the earth. His last recorded words to Ezekiel spoke of this:

"... And the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there."

Ezekiel 48:35.

As Ezekiel suffered and agonized in his witnessing to the rebellious house of Israel, he could have despaired, overwhelmed in mind and spirit, but instead was sustained by the "hand of the LORD" which seven times he experienced there in Babylon. Let us be mindful of the faith and determination of our brother as we consider our own circumstances which can at times seem dire, but how they pale in comparison! Let us then lift up our heads to the hope of our Father's sure promises.

In Hebrews this morning we find help to look to that future with faith and determination, as Paul warns:

"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

Hebrews 4:1.

The "rest" to which Paul refers is the kingdom of God to be established upon this earth when Jesus returns. The root of "rest" implies a settling down, or as the concordance states, to colonize. It gives the thought of no longer being sojourners, but settled into a permanent and blessed state. This takes our mind to Abraham who:

"By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the

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heirs with him of the same promise:

For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

These . . . confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly (of heaven) . . ."

Hebrews 11:9-10, 13-16.

This is the rest promised to the faithful from the time of the creation, when God rested on the sabbath day, blessed it, and sanctified it (Genesis 2:1-2). It is to this promised rest, His kingdom, that we fasten our eyes and bend our utmost efforts now. In this striving we will fail, we do fall short of what God requires, and can be sustained toward that goal only through the Almighty's merciful promise and the provision of our Lord Jesus Christ as our Mediator and Redeemer. Paul clearly warns of this danger:

"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

Hebrews 4:1.

Fear, we must have, Brethren and Sisters; not that God will fail to provide His promised rest, but lest we should come short because of a lack of reverence or true belief.

As we with hope contemplate our present situation, waiting, struggling to be ready, shall we not fasten our minds upon Paul's words:

"Let us therefore come boldly (with trust, hope, confidence) unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Hebrews 4:16.

Now is our time of need and we can come to our Father through Jesus with humble confidence. For we have experienced the help, the blessing, the chastening, and the mercy in our time of probation as we labor toward that eternal rest promised to those who glorify him.

J.A. DeF.

"I CAN OF MINE OWN SELF DO NOTHING"

We have been considering the record in John concerning the ministry of the Lord Jesus, learning of the great lengths to which He went to be subject to God, always giving Him the glory. However, His words and actions were often misunderstood by His own people:

"Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his father, making himself equal with God."

John 5:18.

Jesus' intent was not to supplant His father, indeed in verse 30 he said:

"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."

John 5:30.

His desire in all things was to be subject, yet His enemies twisted His words and threw them back with accusations of blasphemy. However, His words and circumstances were not provided nor preserved for the unbelieving, but for those called out to follow Him.

His work entailed spreading the gospel message, the good news of His future role as Judge and Prince of God's kingdom on earth, and the way one could become part of that future righteousness and peace. He spoke of His work as Judge of the quick and the dead saying:

"For as the father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."

John 5:21-22.

These revelations of His future roles must have agitated the Scribes and Pharisees—those with self-serving minds unwilling to change their rigid thinking and accept Him as their Messiah. However, Jesus spoke, not to create controversy, but that those willing to be subject might believe on Him as the Savior appointed by God:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life."

John 5:24.

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Jesus knew because of His nature, He too was subject to the curse of death, and to the temptations known to every man, yet trusted in God's promise of resurrection that He would become the first fruits of all those asleep in the grave. He went about this work focussed and dedicated to it alone. He did not allow His mind to wander, nor did He procrastinate or fritter away His time of probation on meaningless matters. How much we have to learn from His example if we hope to share in the glories of His kingdom, knowing:

"... the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice.

And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

John 5:28-29.

He fulfilled all righteousness, completing the work given perfectly, out of love and obedience to His Father, while always aware of the grave responsibility before Him as the Redeemer and Savior. He knew that without His overcoming, the hope of eternal life for God's children, before and after Him, would be lost. What a tremendous burden this was to carry. However, He never allowed it to overwhelm, but quietly and courageously encouraged others toward the unity possible through Him and the Almighty:

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

John 15:4-5.

To have the same mind and determination as the Lord Jesus, acknowledging "of myself I can do nothing," is to yield, utterly subject to a higher power. Jesus was, and now sits at the right hand of God as the Mediator for those who wait for His return as their Savior and Prince.

In this same vein, preserved for our help, is the record of a man who brought his sorely afflicted son to Jesus for healing:

"... 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:

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and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.”

Mark 9:17-18.

Here was a young man afflicted with severe seizures since his youth. There being no medication available at that time to ease this suffering—it was incurable. No doubt hearing of Jesus’s earlier miracles, this worried father had brought his son to the disciples, but they were unable to cast out the disease. Upon hearing this Jesus answered:

“... O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.”

Mark 9:19.

When brought to Jesus, the child again was thrown to the ground in a violent convulsion. Seeing the anguish of both the son and his father, He spoke with compassion:

“... If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”

Mark 9:23-24.

Self-doubt without faith can destroy, but faith and humble belief in God are necessary in order to build up the spirit man within. This father feared his faith was insufficient and cried out for strengthening, in the spirit of, “I can of mine own self do nothing”. This boy was cured as a result of his father’s trust in Jesus’ words and his willingness to admit the need for help.

Our path to the kingdom seems impossible at times, full of obstacles placed there by our fleshly weakness and we are fraught with doubt and distraction. Therefore, let us not only hear, but believe, trusting in His words, that of ourselves we can do nothing. Only as we submit to His Word and approach often in prayer through our Mediator for strength and courage with humility, can we hope to be part of His kingdom and glory.

M.C.S.

HELL

An encyclopaedia of the thirteenth century explained hell in the following terms:—

“There is in the middle of the earth a place which is called Hell. Thus much say I to you of this place, that it is full of fire and of burning sulphur - - -”

The New Catholic Encyclopaedia (1967) prints an article on hell which states that a dogmatic pronouncement in the year 543 defined the punishment of demons and the damned as unending: and goes on to dismiss some later speculation (of a more merciful outlook) by saying such qualifications are untenable because of the belief that had continued from AD 543.

The 18th Century Methodist preacher Whitefield told his audience:—

“I see hell opened, I see the damned tormented, I see such a one in hell. Can you live, think you, in everlasting burnings? Is your flesh brass, and your bones iron? What if they are? Hell-fire, that fire prepared for the devil and his angels, will heat them through and through - - -”

The Anglican Church, to a degree, held to the old tradition, for in its “thirtynine articles” following severance from the Roman Catholic Church it stated:—

Article 3: Of the going down of Christ into Hell. As Christ died for us, and was buried, so also is it to be believed, that he went down into Hell.

So the Anglicans believed that after burial, there is a further stage after death defined as hell.

But early this year a report came out from the Church of England through the Church’s doctrine commission:—

“Hell is not eternal torment.” - - - “Annihilation might be a truer picture of damnation than any of the traditional images of the hell of eternal torment.” - - - “In the past the imagery of hell-fire and eternal torment and punishment, often sadistically expressed, has been used to frighten men and women into believing” - - - “Christians have professed appalling theologies which made God into a sadistic monster and left searing psychological scars on many.”

The former Bishop of Durham following this report has commented, “My vision of hell is what we have the capacity to produce if we go on being totally selfish and do not regard other people. It can lead to total misery, for example, in some families and

marriages and in places where there is ethnic cleansing. The point about making hell so awful is to remind us of the awful things we can do. I do not believe in a hell that is eternal. My hope is that the only thing that really lasts is heaven."

Letters to the National Press at the time were interesting and we give some examples as follows:—

"This doctrine has no basis whatever in the Judaeo-Christian Scriptures but was incorporated into the Catholic religion from pagan sources, like so many dogmas. Unfortunately the Reformation failed to get rid of it, and so it has persisted in the Protestant churches till now. In the King James version the word Hell was rendered from the Hebrew SHEOL, which doesn't mean a place of eternal torment but the grave, or condition of death, pending a resurrection in "the last day" ---

The word "fire" is frequently used in the Bible as a symbol of total extinction (not torture), for fire destroys all living things. So when sinners are damned to "eternal fire" it only means they are condemned to eternal destruction, or brought to nothingness, as the Church's report rightly indicates. God did not make Heaven and Hell. Genesis (1v1) clearly says, "In the beginning God made Heaven and Earth." Hell, or the grave, or death, came only after man's original sin;"

Another letter not as sound as the above declared:—

--- "I have never taken --- that Heaven isn't a reality, but rather that language is a bit useless in trying to describe how brilliant it is to be in the presence of God, or how hellish to be outside. Artists of the past tried to represent this imagery on canvas and the Church has been vilified ever since for believing such cruel nonsense. But what words are sufficient to describe being with, or without God? Even the thought of the latter is scary! Sadly, we don't like to see or hear images of reality. But if God is the ultimate in justice as well as mercy, we must learn to live with the searing images of both."

Yet another correspondent wrote:—

"If --- a person consistently rebels against God then the best God can do for him is simply to leave him alone. The Church of England is therefore doing its members a disservice by tranquillising the issue. A respectable fear of

Hell should be part of any Christian religion and is intrinsically healthy. It is a corrective against slackening one's faith to the point where it becomes too cosy and finally fades away into mere benign feelings for the world around us."

It will be seen from some of the comments quoted, that there is still a considerable amount of obscurity of vision over what is the simple truth of the matter. In R. Roberts edition of 1884 about "Christendom", he wrote:—

"The whole teaching of the Bible in regard to the destiny of the wicked is summed up in four words from the 37th Psalm, verse 20, "The wicked shall PERISH." - - - "The wages of sin is DEATH." Death, the extinction of being, is the pre-determined issue of a sinful course. "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap CORRUPTION." (Galatians 6:8) That reaping corruption is equivalent to death, is evident from Romans 8v13: "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall DIE." Corruption results in death, so that the one is equal to the other.

The righteous die as well as the wicked; therefore, it is argued, there must be some other than physical death. The answer is that the death that all men die is not a judicial death—not the final death to be dealt to those who are responsible to judgment. Ordinary death but closes a man's mortal career. There is a SECOND death—final and destructive. The unjust are to be brought forth at Christ's appearing, for judicial arraignment, and their sentence is that, after the infliction of such punishment as may be merited they shall, A SECOND TIME, by violent and divinely-wielded agency, be destroyed in death. To this Jesus refers, when he says, "He that loseth his life for my sake and the gospel's the same shall save it; BUT HE THAT (in the present life) SAVETH HIS LIFE, SHALL (at the resurrection) LOSE IT" (in the second death). All the phraseology of Scripture is in agreement on this subject."

These words were as a refreshing wind, blowing upon the fog and obscurity of religious misconception. The reasoning and the truth however, of R. Roberts's writings of that time was largely resisted by the popular religions. But now, after the elapse of more than eleven decades, popular religion is beginning to move away from the dreadful error that denied the perfect justice and mercy of

the Most High, and added erroneous support to the falsity of a personal devil. The unscriptural belief that the power of death lies in a personal power of evil, separate from and independent of man, and not in man's own sinfulness. Thus degrading the truth to the level of pagan mythology, in which gods, good and bad, are represented to be in physical enmity for the accomplishment of their own purposes. A view still largely upheld, even though Satan's fiery realm is now religiously rejected, thus persistently and erroneously placing the Supreme and Eternal God on a footing with the forces of His own creation.

This consideration, which the Church of England's new stance has brought again to attention, should help to engender profound thankfulness for the work of Dr. J. Thomas and R. Roberts, in revealing the Truth from the preserved word of the Eternal God, as a light in these dark and evil times.

"--- AS WHEN A LION ROARETH ---"

(Revelations 10-3)

(Dr. J. Thomas, 1835)

"He cried with a loud voice as when a lion roars. "Wisdom", says Solomon, "cries upon the high places of the city;" but when she invites the simple to her feast, her accents are mild—"Come eat of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish and live." But when this angel of knowledge calls for the judgments which are to finish the mystery of God, he sets his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, and cries with a loud voice as when a lion roars. Nothing has filled the corrupters and destroyers of the earth with so much dread as the increase of knowledge; and the cry which it has excited against their corruptions and horrors, has reached the deepest recesses of the palace and the conclave, and made the conspirators against the church of God, and the liberties, and the happiness of mankind, tremble for their fate, as when a lion roars.

With these ideas of the vision, read it over again, part by part, with scrutinizing attention. And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. He casts about him as a robe the clouds of heaven; and, preparatory to the age being crowned with goodness, he refreshes the thirsty ground with showers of blessings. They distil upon the pastures of the wilderness, and the little hills rejoice on every side. And his face was as it were the sun, not to scorch, but at once to diffuse his cheering light, and to fructify the watered earth. And he had in his hand a little book open—and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth—and cried with a loud voice as when a lion roars. What a union of beauty and grandeur! As nothing but inspiration could exhibit a representation so perfect and exact, so, divine inspiration alone could impress upon a finite mind imagery so sublime."

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"HE DOTHT NOT RESIST YOU"

(James 5:6)

A little background concerning the apostle James helps us as we consider Paul's record in Galatians, which speaks of him:

"And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me (Paul), they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."

Galatians 3:9.

James was considered a pillar of the church—one of the faithful brethren sent to preach the gospel to natural Israel, while Paul and Barnabas ministered to the Gentiles. He was an active and essential member, a valued elder whose record to "the twelve tribes" or spiritual Israel (faithful Gentiles as well as Jews), is preserved for our help:

"James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting."

James 1:1.

The fifth chapter where we find the context of our consideration, is an admonition directed towards the rich—those who neglect their spiritual duties in favor of hoarding the various worldly treasures which wealth can buy.

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.

Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days."

James 5:1-3.

In their lust for wealth, James charged they had defrauded the poor and innocent:

"Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth."

James 5:4.

The rich were instructed through the Law to provide for the poor and defenceless—showing care for them:

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“And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.

And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.”

Leviticus 19:9-10.

Those who have increased their wealth at the expense of the poor will answer at the judgment seat of Christ, where their riches will be of no avail—for one cannot buy a place in the Kingdom of God:

“Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.”

James 5:5-6.

The “just” who in obedience to Jesus’ commands does not take his own vengeance, who does not resist, is thought to be an easy target by the unscrupulous. However, James warns that the “Lord of sabaoth” who sees and knows all, will not let this injustice go unanswered. Meanwhile to those “just” who wait upon the Lord in patient forbearing, James encourages:

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

Be ye also patient, stabilise your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”

James 5:7-8.

It is difficult to bear under injustice and not retaliate, requiring faith to believe that God knows our circumstances and allows them. If one resisted would he be any different from his persecutors? Paul in his letter to the Romans encourages also:

“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord.”

Romans 12:19.

This same thought is expressed again by Paul as he exhorts his Hebrew brethren:

“For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The

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Lord shall judge his people. But call to remember the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;”

Hebrews 10:30, 32.

In applying this same spirit to the Law, the Lord Jesus taught: “Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

Matthew 5:38-39.

The evil done by those who have “condemned and killed the just” is a sore trial to bear, yet the Almighty who knows the number of “the very hairs of your head”, allows these circumstances to test the diligent. Will they persevere in patience resisting not, in order to please Him?

Paul teaches the importance of such a gentle and unresisting spirit, as he writes to his Roman brethren:

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.”

Romans 13:1.

Job was a man of great wealth who did not oppress others, but rather esteemed the riches of the Spirit of greater value than his worldly goods. Because of this attitude he was known as “perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil” (Job 1:1). While in sore affliction, his friends unjustly accused him, yet he did not resist. In meekness he accepted their injuries, waiting with patient forbearance the Lord’s deliverance. At the end of his trial, he was blessed with greater material riches than before, because they failed to corrupt his spiritual values.

Let us remember, Brethren and Sisters, that all our circumstances are known to God, and if accompanied by difficulty and injustice, we are to resist not, but rather in patience await His intervention and deliverance. To resist our circumstances is to resist God. Let us rather display that meekness and love which is of the Spirit as exemplified by the Lord Jesus, who while under persecution and distress resisted not, even unto death.

M.C.S.

ONLY IN THE LORD

From a recent magazine article

Under the heading, "Apostolic Teaching about Marriage" the following was put forward (which we quote in an extract):—

"When he (the Apostle Paul) was dealing with various marital issues in 1 Corinthians 7. Turning to the situation of believing women who were widows, he advised that 'if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married TO WHOM SHE WILL; only in the Lord' (1 Cor. 7:39) - - -

The purpose of the Apostle's comment can be better appreciated once its background is revealed. The reason for marriage being "only in the Lord" has a sound foundation. All believers in Christ are in the position of Zelophehad's daughters: they are heirs of great and precious promises. That inheritance must not be treated lightly or allowed to be eroded. Nor must we let a situation occur at the Jubilee when Christ's return which would allow the inheritance to pass from us: 'Every one of the tribes of the children of Israel shall keep himself to his own inheritance' (Numbers 36:9).

Marriage out of faith is therefore treated by the Apostle extremely seriously; he viewed it as a potentially fatal obstacle in a believer's walk to the kingdom. As joint-heirs with the Lord (Romans 8:17), we should remain yoked with him whose 'yoke is easy, and whose burden is light' (Matthew 11:30). So Paul explains to the brothers and sisters in Corinth: 'Be ye not equally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?' (2 Cor. 6:14).

Not only Paul, but also Peter in his writings refers to believers' hope of inheritance when he explains the responsibilities of marriage: 'Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being HEIRS TOGETHER of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered' (1 Peter 3:7). With these clear teachings before us, can there be any doubt of the Almighty's mind on this matter?"

The Remnant, of course, agrees wholeheartedly with the principle as above shown.

THE REMNANT

From the same magazine, and of the same date
"Sister J. --- (formerly ---), having married out of the faith,
retains her fellowship by ecclesial decision."

The ecclesia that made this judgment obviously does not regard the circumstances perhaps so seriously as the writer of "Apostolic Teaching about Marriage." It is an evidence of a disunity that fails those who would uphold the gospel. The seriousness of the position is made very clear, " - - - what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" (2 Corinthians 6:15). To go deliberately against this principle is an offence against the Spirit, and any who excuse such a failure indirectly fellowship the error of those who fail.

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

"This know --- that in the last days --- men shall be --- blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, --- despisers of those that are good."

(2 Timothy 3:1-3)

Recently a newly appointed Bishop of London declared an urgent need to do something about the "moral vacuum" threatening English inner cities. While he was speaking in St. Paul's Cathedral in London, a demonstration was taking place outside in protest against the new bishop's refusal to ordain women as priests. The position of Bishop of London is the third senior office of the Anglican Church; so division in the Church of England is obviously not a trivial matter when the eminent ones of the Church are so split. However the Bishop has bent his principles as evident from the report of his saying that he will work in partnership with the 70 women priests in his diocese but will not ordain women himself. This yielding to expediency reveals why even in the form of religion, there is a losing of moral ground in the populace at large. "Britain," says this Bishop, "is fast becoming a religiously illiterate society ---." He warned of moral barbarism in cities. This is certainly true.

A comment from the Head Master of Rugby School is significant; writing to a newspaper he declared, "All Heads --- yearn for --- decent behaviour in their schools ---. Schools must map out very clearly what they expect, and then gently (but with granite in the soul) insist on that with a kind of tenacious hope, knowing all the while that failure will be frequent --- honesty, respect for others, patience, a sense of fair play and so on, need to be put into practice --- we need to insist on good behaviour in every nook and cranny of our schools ---."

A director in Education at Manchester University has made the comment, "All of us need to wake up to our moral responsibilities, and part of the reason for moral decline surely lies with the way we have handed over increasing responsibilities for our communities to government ---."

This educationist is right in directing attention to a malaise of indifference in society. But if parents and leaders are failing in their morals, how can they impart morality to their children?

A farmer from Warwickshire has shrewdly put his finger on the problem, "Children have no difficulty in learning the rules, the

concept is very well taught in schools; children know that honesty is right, prejudice is wrong and that the strong should protect the weak. However, they also know that this is not what happens in the real world. Being astute, they apply the rules selectively and in their own favour, just as the adults do. There are plenty of exceptions, but in general adults have given themselves licence to obey what rules they choose and children will follow suit, set them what essays we may."

What a sad reflection on present day society, and also a fulfilment of 2 Timothy chapter 3, "This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come."

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

As changes in every brother and sister's circumstances are experienced, gratitude is felt for the guidance and care of our heavenly Father. He provides for every need in His mercy—which indeed "endures for ever."

God willing, a visit from one here to our brethren and sisters in England is contemplated if all goes well.

J.A.Def.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

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

As the work continues, we have much to be thankful for, in the help received from our Brethren across the seas. Not only in the endeavour to witness, but also in dealing with correspondence that comes to us from time to time.