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A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

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AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD
"THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE"

In recent readings we have been exhorted by Paul to grow in love — that love which binds the brethren of Christ into one body, one hope and one faith. This unity is possible only through God's love for His people, seen in the provision of His own Son, Jesus Christ, as the means of redemption. We are familiar with the apostle's words in I Corinthians 13, especially as we come to perceive that perfect love shown in Jesus' victory, which we are remembering at this Table. Paul summarizes for us:

"Charity (love) never faileth: . . .

For we know in part . . .

But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." I Corinthians 13:8-10.

A part is only a portion of the whole. Does this not aptly describe our knowledge, our ability, our wisdom, and our love? Paul continues:

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." I Corinthians 13:11.

As a child matures there is growth in understanding, in perception, in wisdom, and in submission. How is this achieved? It is not through the loving care of parents who teach, discipline, restrain wrong inclinations, and promote what is right, gently but firmly helping us to put away childish traits? Such training takes much patience, understanding, and above all, love. Such tender care and loving example can result, as a child grows, in an appreciation of God's command to "honour thy father and thy mother."

This is also the case of those maturing in spiritual strength through the tender care of our Father's oversight. As we experience this, we are helped to turn from concern for self, to a more grateful love for God, for His Son, and for our brethren and sisters. Paul exhorts us:

". . . That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part,

maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."
Ephesians 4:14-16.

Speaking the truth in love" — just what does this mean? The concordance defines it as being true in doctrine and profession, doing so, not to edify one's self, but to build up (edify) the house of God, those faithful, for whom Jesus gave His life. It is not easy to do this, for we humans are not naturally so inclined. It is only as we grow in the love which is selfless and godly that such a change can begin to develop. The Apostle himself experienced a great change, beginning with Jesus' wondrous appearance when he was Damascus-bound, in order to persecute His followers. Fearing and trembling, Paul asked:

"... Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? . . ." Acts 9:6.

As he was shown what God required of him, Paul's whole life changed, as he gave of himself for Christ's "called-out ones." Ultimately he lost his life in this work of edifying those who sought Him. How this helps us to perceive what God requires of those who determine to serve Him. First of all, there must be perception of what we are by nature. Paul reveals this aspect for us:

"For now we see through a glass, darkly: but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."
I Corinthians 13:12.

Paul in speaking of a "glass" is referring to a mirror — that which reflects — revealing exactly what we are like. By looking into a mirror do we not see our face as it is, thereby discerning what changes are needed so that we can project a really "good image"? The Apostle reminds us that we now see "darkly" which is made up of two words. The first refers to one's general state; the second word is "enigma" — puzzling, unclear, baffling. This is true, for we know now only in part, dimly discerning while questioning. Paul goes on to reveal that as there is a growing love for God and His word, then we shall see "face to face" — no longer darkly, puzzled, but able to discern exactly what we are.

Moses experienced that revelation:

"... The LORD spoke unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend . . ." Exodus 33:11.

Moses was a friend of God, a companion, a fellow, a loved one. The word of God has commanded: "thou shalt love thy neighbour (friend) as thyself" (Leviticus 19:18). Where there is love there is the ability to speak heart to heart with clear communication, for whatever we speak, a true friend receives in the spirit of appreciation and

concern. This eliminates any “enigma” and thus creates a full and mutual understanding. We are now in the flesh, but when Jesus returns, “then” we hope to be face to face, heart to heart.

Paul continues to help as he adds:

“... now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”
I Corinthians 13:12.

Who now knows us perfectly? only our Father is aware of our every thought, every word, every deed, as well as every need. If accounted acceptable at Jesus’ judgment seat, “then” we will know all things perfectly, no longer puzzled and at times failing, for all frailties of the flesh will be gone.

To help us do so, James exhorts:

“... be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”
James 1:22.

“Deceiving” comes from a root word meaning to use a word (logos) wrongly. How easily a natural mind does do this, deceiving self and thereby excusing what one wants to do. Such is a hearer only. Can we overcome such a lack, or will we remain as a “hearer only”?

“... he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass (mirror): For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.”
James 1:23-24.

To behold self involves discovery and perception. A mirror truly reflects what we appear to be. But what is it that allows one to see his natural-born or fleshly “inside” appearance? Is it not God’s word which shows us exactly what we really are — condemned to die because of sin, naturally having no hope beyond the grave? A “hearer only” seeing himself revealed from God’s word, “forgetteth (puts out of mind) what manner of man he was” because he lacks true love and respect for God and His word. James then reveals for us the mind of one who in God’s sight is a doer:

“But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”
James 1:25.

How can we look into that “perfect law of liberty”? Paul makes very clear what is the ultimate end of a continual awareness and care for God:

“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open (unveiled) face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are

changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." II Corinthians 3:17-18.

To be thus changed involves a transformation. Love for the word of God and working with diligence in our hearts can help us change our natural man into a man of spirit, pleasing to God.

Let us, Brethren and Sisters, continue to look into that "perfect law of liberty" — clearly seeing there our natural frail tendencies, yet seeking to grow closer to the image of the Lord Jesus. He perfectly kept the law and now sits at His Father's right hand, with love mediating for us, understanding and helping us to be doers of that word, as we long and labor for the blessing which He will bestow upon His return. This is only possible as we increase in love, for without it we are hearers only.

How vital then in ourselves is that sincere and steadfast deep regard for Truth, for each other, and for Him. Without it we cannot grow up or be edified in that body whose head is Christ. Paul, discerning this, concludes his exhortation to us:

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity (love), these three; but the greatest of these is (love)." I Corinthians 13:13.

Lest us ask ourselves: Do we reflect it?

J.A. DeF

"BUY THE TRUTH, AND SELL IT NOT"

In our recent portions from Proverbs we are privileged to read the advice and counsel of the Spirit through Solomon, that we may be instructed:

"Buy the truth, and sell it not . . ." Proverbs 23:23.

To "buy" is translated as "to erect or create", giving the thought of building, while the word "truth" means stability or support. To buy the Truth is to create a spiritual building within — framed and fitted from the word of God — and created solely for His service. Within that Truth, is indeed a sureness and stability, engendered not only through the love and fellowship that is known among brethren and sisters, but also in the knowledge of the sure mercies of David that await those faithful, so privileged to be called His sons and daughters.

David taught these precepts to his son Solomon, and in turn instructs us of that building:

"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Psalm 127:1

How fitting that this psalm is entitled, "A Song of degrees for Solomon," (a going up to Zion), for it was he who was permitted to build God's house when his father David was denied, being a man of war. We too must be guided in our building, in order to build from the Master's plans, for the building is not ours but of the Lord's design.

The desire to attain unto God's Truth must be ardent and persistent as Isaiah counsels:

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

Isaiah 55:1.

Isaiah is speaking of the spiritual food which is available to all without price. It is nourishment for the inner man who needs wisdom and guidance in order to please and honor the Almighty. This is purchased not with money, but with the sacrifice of one's living, through obedience and devotion to God:

"Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with

you, even the sure mercies of David.” Isaiah 55:2-3.

The word of God must be diligently sought after, not with money, but with a commitment to subject our living to the Father’s will. By so doing can one grow in stability, knowing the support provided in the Truth.

This hope of an “everlasting covenant” and “sure mercies” which Isaiah spoke of, was a gift given to David for his faithfulness. He inclined to the word of God, yielding his own will and body, even in the midst of trying circumstances, looking forward in faith to his Seed who would fulfill all these promises. Of the same, Paul preaches, as he taught in the synagogue at Antioch, linking the promises given to David with the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, his greater Son:

“And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again: as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.”

Matthew 13:32-34.

The creating or building of support and stability in the Truth can only come through His Son, the Lord Jesus. Christ, the Mediator, now at the right hand of God is there to give support to those who bring their prayers to God through Him. He gives succor, knowing their weaknesses and temptations, having suffered likewise, bringing their prayers with true empathy, to the Father.

During His ministry, Jesus also taught of “buying the truth”:

“. . . the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.”

Matthew 13:44.

He likens the finding of the Truth to the discovery of “treasure hid in a field” — something of great price that invokes such joy, one will sell all that he owns to obtain it.

The same thought is expressed in another of Jesus’ parables:

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.” Matthew 13:45-46.

Here is illustrated the spirit of those seeking to be part of God's household, who value His Truth beyond all else. It is only through God's grace that one may hope to be part of that household of God, wherein Christ is the cornerstone. This grace is indeed of inestimable value — a "pearl of great price". Paul in an endeavour to bring his Hebrew brethren from the Law to Christ, speaks of Jesus' place in that house:

"For this man (Christ Jesus) was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

Hebrews 3:3-6.

Paul goes on to speak of the rebuke given those early Hebrews in the wilderness when they, in effect sold the treasure they had been given, through rebellion and disobedience — trading away the preciousness of the Truth:

"Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways."

Hebrews 3:8-10.

We too are tested in the same way by our flesh, which tries to erode the building we have endeavored to establish with God and His Son. If our primary desire is to "buy" the Truth above all else, we will be helped, as once more we are instructed by Paul:

"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

That by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made

an high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”

Hebrews 6:17-20.

This hope and understanding of God’s Truth can be an anchor, particularly as we recognize the support which can come through the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Mediator.

Solomon who wrote these words, “Buy the truth, and sell it not”, sadly sold his own hope of life — trading it for the fleeting temporal pleasures offered by his many wives and abundant riches. What a grave warning to us today as we read his words, inspired by the Spirit, knowing he succumbed to the world’s seduction at the end of his life.

Let us, Brethren and Sisters renew our determination to cleave to that straight and narrow path and with our whole living endeavour to “Buy the truth, and sell it not.”

M.C.S

OMNIPOTENCE (Dr. J. Thomas)

Absolute power, from whose incorruptible substance or hypostasis free spirit radiates, is before all existing things. This self-existing incorruptible substance is essentially spirit — spirit substance — a concentration and condensation into ONE BODY of all the attributes, intellectual, moral and physical of omnipotence — all things are out of Deity (1 Cor. 8:6). All things being out of Deity, they were not made out of nothing. The sun, moon and stars, together with all things pertaining to each, were made out of something, and that something was the radiant effluence of His substance, or free spirit, which pervades unbounded space. By free spirit, all created things are connected with the centre of the universe, which is light that no man can approach unto, so that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father, who is not far from every one of us. The formation of the first man on the earth was the expression by spirit of the peculiar divine idea or mental image. The spirit-developed form styled man, was the result of power divinely exercised upon the dust of the ground.

The Remnant's comments

How anyone claiming to be religious and a believer in God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, can also at the same time accept in any degree Charles Darwin's theories is quite amazing.

Darwin tried to excuse himself by saying:-

"I see no good reason why the views given in this volume (the Origin of Species by means of natural selection) should shock the religious feelings of anyone - - - . A celebrated author and "divine" has written to me that "he has gradually learnt to see that it is just as noble a conception of the Deity to believe that He created a few original forms capable of self development into other and needful forms, as to believe that He required a fresh act of creation, to supply the voids caused by the action of His laws". - - -

The chief cause of our natural unwillingness to admit that one species has given birth to other and distinct species, is that we are always slow in admitting great changes of which we do not see the steps. - - -

Although I am fully convinced of the truth of the views given in this volume under the form of an abstract, I by no means expect to convince experienced naturalists whose minds are stocked with a multitude of facts all viewed, during a long course of years, from a point of view directly

opposite to mine. It is so easy to hide our ignorance under such expressions as the "plan of creation", "unity of design" etc., and to think we give an explanation when we only restate a fact. - - -

"Do they believe that at each supposed act of creation one individual or many were produced? Were all the infinitely numerous kinds of animals and plants created as eggs or seed, or as full grown? and in the case of mammals, were they created bearing the false marks of nourishment from the mother's womb? - - -

We ought not to believe that innumerable beings within each great class have been created with plain, but deceptive, marks of descent from a single parent - - -."

This clever reasoning has deceived mankind, and particularly people claiming to believe in God. Apologists for Darwin have brought out the philosophy that articles of faith such as Adam being the first man, the Garden of Eden, and the Virgin Birth can be rejected as historical fact and then accepted, in a religious sense, as myth, which nevertheless, conveys spiritual instruction.

What terrible ignorance it is, and what denegrating of the eternal power of the One Omnipotent God. To suggest that God created man by a slow process of evolvment, who was to be finally made into "His own image", is patently absurd. Those who accept such pseudo science have not the knowledge of the holy, whatever their religious claim to be "Christian", and they ought not to find a place among any claiming to be ecclesias of Christ.

LOST SHEEP

Under the above heading, a letter to one of the main ecclesial magazines was published recently.

The following is an extract from the same:-

"What has disturbed me for many years, is the need for as much enthusiasm for the recovery of lost brethren and sisters, as there is for the conversion of new members.

A brother or a sister who wants to return needs a huge amount of support and encouragement. That is not the time for confessions and declarations. In Luke 15, our Lord has given us the example to follow in receiving a returning brother or sister. The decision to return requires courage which needs our support: not hurdles and obstacles. In the parable, the returning brother received a compassionate and rejoicing welcome "when he was yet a great way off" (verse 20) — no barriers for his faltering step, no test of sincerity. Love does not question the sincerity of a returning brother (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). The hurdles are more likely to be placed by the brother lost at home, who was "angry and would not go in" (verse 28). The need for the recovery of "lost sheep" is there. If we are to give equal place to the recovery of lost brethren and sisters as to preaching, we must have a balanced mission. We who enjoy the support of ecclesias, should feel duty bound, to give some thought to the spiritual needs of our disfellowshipped brethren and sisters."

The Prodigal Son

The above letter refers to Christ's parable concerning the prodigal son. It is interesting to note what R. Roberts said on this subject:-

"There have been many fanciful interpretations of this. There is no need for special ingenuity. The meaning of it is evidently very simple. It follows the parables of the lost sheep and the lost money, and was spoken in the same connection, and is therefore to be read in the light of the cavils and feelings that suggested them. The Pharisees and the Scribes murmured at Christ's reception of publicans and sinners. Christ aims by parable to exhibit the true meaning of his attitude - - -. That a father should compassionately receive a son under such circumstances must have seemed natural even to the fossilized Scribes

and Pharisees. How much more was divine clemency to be shown to the fallen classes of Israel, who listened gladly to Christ, with an earnest resolution to walk in the ways of righteousness? - - -

The record of it has been at the same time an encouragement, during all the ages that have since elapsed, to the erring who desire to return to the ways of right. It is, in a parabolic form, a reiteration of the comforting words of the Eternal Father, by Isaiah, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isaiah 55:7).

The above gives a balanced understanding of what Jesus was teaching. First of all Jesus endeavoured to explain how right it was to endeavour to show mercy to those ostracised publicans and sinners of His generation. R. Roberts in his exposition gives also an application for present needs; but let us note how he underlines the necessity of the erring to forsake his way and his unrighteous thoughts.

The letter we question also refers to 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. In that reference are the words, "(love) Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil - - - ." Using these words the writer of the letter asserts that "Love does not question the sincerity of a returning brother." How faithful questioning of the motives, of one applying for a return to fellowship, after previous failure, can be said to be wrong conduct by the Brethren, on the grounds of scriptural condemnation of evil thinking, is an amazing assertion.

Jesus clearly declared, concerning the erring:-

"- - - if he neglect to hear the ecclesia, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." (Matthew 18:17).

Surely this instruction defines the position of the rejector of ecclesial overtures for the help of the one erring. The ecclesia is not required to go on trying to change the mind of the rejector. It is inappropriate to speak of a "need for - - - enthusiasm for the recovery of lost brethren." When the ecclesia has made its efforts to save, its spiritual work has in that particular been done. If God should overrule at a later date to bring the erring back to a right state of mind, then, and only then, has the ecclesia a duty to return to its earlier endeavour.

There are many scriptures that give guidance as to what is

required and of how to proceed where one or more are in error (as follows):-

“--- put away from among yourselves that wicked person.”
(1 Corinthians 5:13).

“--- thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam
--- . Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly --- .”
(Revelation 2:14-16).

“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if
God peradventure will give them repentance to the
acknowledging of the truth --- .” (I Timothy 2:25).

“Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.”
(Matthew 3:8).

“- - - repent and turn to God, and do works meet for
repentance.” (Acts 26:20).

To allow someone to return to Fellowship without helping
such to a true repentance is to place into a false position, and is a
failing of duty.

True repentance is defined:-

“- - - ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness is
wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what
indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire,
yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have
approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.”

(2 Corinthians 7:11).

The kindly appearing sentiments in the letter which we
question is mens outlook; God’s requirements are not to be modified
by human sentimentality; His way is the way of wisdom and it is
holy.

A BIBLE CLASS

“ . . . the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name. ”

Isaiah 65:15

The subject we are considering is a warning from the prophet Isaiah who prophesied to Judah and Jerusalem for approximately sixty years:

“And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name:”
Isaiah 65:14-15.

The chronology indicates this particular time of Isaiah’s writing at approximately 698 B.C., which would be during the reign of Manasseh who ruled for fifty-five years after his father Hezekiah. Most of his reign was evil, for he embraced the idolatries of the surrounding nations and led Judah and Jerusalem according to his perverse practises:

“And he (Manasseh) did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.

For 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.”
II Kings 21:2-3, 6.

Because of their disobedience and rebellion, God no longer considered them His servants, but rather His enemies, and through His prophet, warned of the calamity and wrath He would bring upon them:

“But ye are they that forsake the LORD, that forget my holy mountain . . .

Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not.”
Isaiah 65:11-12.

Because of their idolatries, the name of Israel had become an abomination to the Almighty, and for their wickedness He forsook them. Only that remnant who still looked to Him and endeavoured

to walk in faithfulness, would He call His servants:

“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed:

Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit.”

Isaiah 65:13-14.

For those privileged to be known as His servants, God promised a new name and a new dwelling place. They would be known as “Hephzibah”, meaning “my delight is in her” and their land would be called, “Beulah”, meaning, “married” — a blessed and peaceful state promised to those approved at the judgment seat of Christ:

“And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name . . . Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.

For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.”

Isaiah 62:2, 4-5.

This speaks of the Kingdom age, when His servants will dwell at peace, being granted the gift of eternal life through His mercy, ruling over the earth as kings and priests with their Head, the Lord Jesus.

In like manner, the Spirit’s message was sent through John to the faithful ecclesia in Philadelphia, speaking of this new name:

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name.”

Revelation 3:12.

Here again is the promise to those faithful in Philadelphia of a new name — to identify them as the servants and friends of God.

There have been various times in the history of God’s people where He has changed their name. Abram and Sarai’s names were changed to Abraham and Sarah, to reflect the promises given them because of faithfulness:

“As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham: for a father of many nations have I made thee.

And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai, thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.” Genesis 17:4-5, 15-16.

Those called out throughout the ages to be His people have been known collectively by various names, whether it be servants, friends, Christians, the Bride or New Jerusalem to be. John was permitted to see these last two in vision, at the end of God’s purpose with the earth—those found approved through His grace, gathered together and identified as His:

“And I (JOHN) looked and, lo, a Lamb stood on Mount Zion, and with him a hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads . . . These are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.” Revelation 14:1,4.

Let us Brethren and Sisters, take warning from God’s record through Isaiah, lest we be counted among those who will suffer the Almighty’s wrath to come upon the disobedient and so lose the hope of receiving that name which identifies those who are His.

M.C.S.

LETTER FROM L.C. CONCERNING THE REMNANT'S BOOK
"Religious Doctrines — examined and questioned."

Thank you for sending the enclosed for me to read.

Whereas I could go along with much of the contents one thing worries me — many of the conclusions are based on very selective and arbitrary texts. Other texts could point in opposite directions. In some matters of faith, I believe there is a place for reverent uncertainty — there isn't absolutely clear and compelling evidence in Scripture one way or the other.

Do you know the book on Christian doctrine 'In understanding be men' by T. C. Hammond?

The Remnant's reply (already sent)

Thank you for your letter. We note that you are in agreement with much of what is said in the booklet which we sent to you, nevertheless you still have serious qualifications.

The grounds for the doubts you express is that our booklet which deals with religious doctrines uses "very selective and arbitrary texts", and that "other texts could point in opposite directions".

May we raise a question? Is the word of God ambiguous? This word witnesses to itself:-

"The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." (Psalm 12:6).

Can pure words be referred to as "arbitrary texts"? Why do we have the Bible? Has it not been sent by heaven to show to God's created, His Truth? Are we then, when we receive that Word, to be left in the dilemma of "reverent uncertainty"? The word again testifies:-

"Every word of God is pure - - - .

Add thou not unto his words - - - ." (Proverbs 30:5-6).

Is there an adding to the message of the Word of God, if we say "there isn't absolutely clear and compelling evidence in Scripture"? Does that statement not imply there is something missing, requiring "an adding" before we can be clear as to what is Truth?

Jesus made a solemn promise to His disciples:-

"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed: And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32).

In considering this promise of Christ, we must not delude ourselves into thinking that His words mean a new start with a new

gospel, and a new revelation. Jesus upheld all of the word of God:-

“- - - the scripture cannot be broken - - - .” (John 10:35).

“- - - one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” (Matthew 5:18).

There was, of course, a new covenant, in Christ bringing the gentiles into relationship with the God of Israel, whereas Israel, after the flesh, failed to hold on to what had been given to them in the words of Truth. They misread the witness of God, hence their reproval by Christ:-

“Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me - - - .” (John 5:39-40).

The Truth has to be searched out, but it certainly is there in the Word of God.

“- - - Comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

(1 Cor. 2:13).

“- - - rightly dividing the word of truth.”

(2 Timothy 2:15).

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

“- - - their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.” (Proverbs 24:2).

The United States, Russia, France, Britain and China are said to be the nuclear powers. It is also thought that Israel also has the nuclear weapon, though it has never been reported to have tested an atomic device. The world has felt relieved that these nations have scaled down nuclear weapon production.

What a shock recently, then, when India exploded a nuclear device. What a far cry this is from the days of Gandhi, who when advocating resistance to injustice insisted that his Indian fellows must always be passive in their protests.

The man who set India on the road to this advanced technological capability was H. J. Bhabha who was a student at Cambridge University in the 1930's. He built a laboratory at Bombay, near the harbour, and was supported by the former Indian Prime Minister J. Nehru. Britain also provided him with financial aid, and also Canada, which helped him to construct a reactor after the pattern of a reactor that Canada had. Following this India began to produce plutonium. By 1974 India was ready for a nuclear test, and a fission explosion took place. Since then India appeared dormant in

nuclear weapon production. It is now proved this was not the case. Following on from Bhabha's work R. Ramanna applied himself assiduously and then R. Chidambaram who in 1994 was elected to the International Atomic Energy Agency as its chairman, whose purpose has been the peaceful application of nuclear energy.

But underneath "hearts were studying destruction". The tests India has now carried out are of the more advanced thermonuclear kind.

There has been an outcry and dismay has been expressed in the West. Pakistan, India's rival, was particularly critical, and received sympathy, whereas India was spoken of as the villain. That is until suddenly Pakistan carried out its own nuclear tests. Five experimental explosions took place, each following quickly after the other. This made those who were supporting Pakistan to look foolish. Pakistan was at least as bad as India. In fact Pakistan imposed a state of emergency upon its people, telling them they must be prepared for financial sacrifice to save their Islamic nation from the Hindus. Pakistan also moved its new Ghauri missiles to border areas. India on the other hand ensured that there should be no talk of war in its own camp. In fact India's Prime Minister stated Pakistan's tests posed no new threat to the nation's security, giving the assurance that his government had no intention of joining an arms race.

Obviously Pakistan had been preparing for mass destruction for some time, and its protests about India's tests were hypocritical. Underneath their "hearts were studying destruction".

The question now is, what will neighbouring Iran do about it? There has been talk of Iran seeking equipment from China and Russia, and of attempting co-operation with North Korea for the production of ballistic missiles.

Such preparations make Asia a less safe place, and especially so when the India-Pakistan rift is not only about disputed Kashmir, which India largely controls, but also because of great religious differences.

It is a situation which brings to attention once more the scriptural warning:-

"And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved - - -."
(Matthew 24:22).

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

Every Third Week: Revelation Study

Help has been granted in ecclesial and personal lives, both here and in Manchester, to encourage and comfort. It is a gracious provision of our Father who, knowing every need, provides what is best. It is well that we recognize and remember with gratitude these great blessings.

Awareness of the corruption and self-gratification on all sides is a constant reminder of the need for care and for Jesus' soon return as the imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is evil continually. We join our hearts to Jesus' prayer for His brethren that God "... should not take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

J.A.DeF.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.00 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 7.15 p.m.

Interest from far and wide requesting our literature is continuing; and particularly recently from several countries in Africa.

This indeed encourages us to press on with the work.