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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

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AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD
"I WILL BE WITH THEE"

Over the past few days, the reading in Genesis has directed our thoughts to Jacob. God's hand was involved with this man from his conception. His mother Rebekah was barren, and it was only through God's answer to Isaac's prayer that she was able to bear Jacob and Esau, his twin. Of these, God told Rebekah:

"... Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger." Genesis 25:23.

The firstborn was Esau:

"...after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: . . ." Genesis 25:26.

Jacob means supplanter, also one who seizes by the heel. Esau despised his birthright and sold it to Jacob. Later Jacob, helped by Rebekah, deceived Isaac in order to receive his father's blessing, which should have been Esau's as the firstborn. This caused enmity between the two brothers, as Esau complained to Isaac:

"... Is not he rightly named Jacob? For he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing . . ." Genesis 27:36.

In his anger Esau determined to kill his brother. When Rebekah learned of this evil purpose, she urged Jacob to flee:

"Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran; And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away; . . . and he forget that which thou hast done to him: then I will send and fetch thee from thence; why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?" Genesis 27:43-45.

On the journey to Laban, Jacob was sent a vision from God:

"...behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." Genesis 28:12.

In the vision, God spoke to him, saying:

"And, behold, I am with thee, and I will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of:" Genesis 28:15.

Knowing Jacob's grief and troubled mind, the Almighty in mercy revealed this ladder, as a sign of the Spirit's help to Jacob, assuring him that indeed He would care for him. This vision, revealing a way open between Jacob and his God, pointed forward to the Lord Jesus' coming from His Father as the mediator and redeemer between God and men (John 1:51). Thus, Jacob, sustained and blessed, continued his journey to Laban.

There he came to love Rachel, Laban's younger daughter, and in time asked Laban's permission to marry her. Laban agreed only if Jacob would serve him seven years for her. Laban guilefully gave Leah, his older daughter, to be Jacob's wife. When Jacob protested, Laban agreed he could marry Rachel only if he served him for another seven years. At the end of the fourteen years, Jacob sought to leave, but was persuaded by Laban to further serve him in return for a portion of Laban's cattle. During this period of servitude, Laban changed his wages ten times, and sought to cheat him out of the promised cattle. During this long time (21 years) Jacob would meditate as to why he had to endure this evil treatment, recognizing that it must be allowed by God. He would remember his deceit in obtaining Esau's blessing from Isaac. Rebekah, troubled by Jacob's long absence, would also perceive that she had a part in Jacob's deceitfully obtaining the blessing. Both were required to submit to God's requiring Jacob to endure for 21 years, instead of for the "few days" that Rebekah had felt would pass before Jacob's return. Jacob would be helped to endure this oppression as he remembered the almighty's words at Bethel: "... I am with thee."

At long last, God said to Jacob:

"... Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred;
and I will be with thee." Genesis 31:3.

As Jacob and his family fled, along with his flocks, Laban in anger persued, but was warned of God:

"... Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or
bad." Genesis 31:24.

God was indeed with Jacob who acknowledged His care as he spoke to Laban:

"Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the
fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me
away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the
labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight."

Genesis 31:42.

What care, what mercy the Almighty showed to Jacob, as He was

truly with him! In mercy and love He is also with those who, like Jacob, submit to His hand and wait for His guidance, so resting upon Him.

As Jacob journeyed back to the land of Canaan, he feared Esau's wrath, especially when he learned that Esau was coming to meet him with 400 men:

"Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed . . ."

Genesis 32:7.

In his fear he divided his family and flocks into two bands, and sent them ahead:

"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of day."

Genesis 32:24.

To help Jacob, God sent an angel who "wrestled" with him all night; and he persevered in clinging to that messenger. Then the angel spoke to Jacob, saying:

" . . . Thy name shall be called no more Jacob (supplanter), but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

Genesis 32:28.

Having overcome by clinging to the angel, Jacob was no longer to be called a "supplanter" — but a prince, having power with God. Perceiving this God-given blessing:

" . . . Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

Genesis 32:30.

Jacob clearly knew and rejoiced in God's closeness and great mercy, as His angel spoke with him. Later on, Moses also came to know this closeness with the Almighty when:

" . . . the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend."

Exodus 33:11.

Both Jacob and Moses were accounted as His friends, as He encouraged them in their willing determination to walk in His way. Brethren and Sisters, we are also yearning and struggling to be His "friends" — seeking to honor and obey Him in all our living. We cannot see God face to face, but we do experience His loving kindness and grace as we are permitted to approach in prayer through Jesus Christ His Son.

Jacob was sustained at Peniel where he was given clear evidence that God was indeed with him. As he soon faced Esau, he could say to him: I am no longer known as a supplanter, for God has changed my name to Israel, a prince with God. To help him value the blessing received there, God provided a reminder as:

“... he halted upon his thigh.” Genesis 32:31.

In the place where the angel touched him, the sinew shrank, causing Jacob to limp for the rest of his life. As he rejoined Rachel and Leah, they might have asked what caused him to limp. Jacob would relate the help and blessing God gave to him there at Peniel. Wherever he walked, Jacob would go haltingly in his thinking and planning, realizing that the flesh is weak and uncertain, but that there is a Power which can strengthen and guide in the way of the spirit, rather than the flesh.

Jacob's halting would be like the thorn in the flesh which Paul experienced:

“... lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me...”

II Corinthians 12:7.

A thorn in one's flesh results in a pricking — a constant reminder that we are flesh. Three times Paul prayed to God that this pricking might be removed. The Almighty responded:

“... My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

II Corinthians 12:9.

Jacob, going haltingly, was aware of God's grace as he met Esau and offered him gifts, saying:

“Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough...”

Genesis 33:11.

What blessing Jacob received as he felt so close to God! Do we not, Brethren and Sisters, experience a special nearness and perception of His presence, as did Jacob when God declared: “... I will be with thee”? Do we then realize the need for a “thorn” in our flesh, or a halting walk, as a reminder that at times our own walk is weak and uncertain? With such a reminder, we are helped to “go softly” — looking to our Father for guidance, rather than going confidently in our own strength. We are all pulled up short at times. Indeed, His grace is sufficient for us as we trust in God's words: “... I will be with thee.”

David was one who knew uncertainty, going haltingly as he expressed his dependence upon his God:

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and

thy staff they comfort me.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."

Psalm 23:4,6.

Let us halt, Brethren and Sisters, leaning upon Him, asking for His support, having learned how weak and failing is our own strength.

J.A. DeF

THE DOVE OF SILENCE

In Psalm 56 we have recorded for our help, David's mind and spirit expressed as he fled to Gath in fear of Saul. This circumstance is also chronicled in the Book of Samuel which gives a more detailed version.

He was in dire straits — fleeing from Saul who had vowed to kill him, by taking refuge in the only place he knew Saul would not pursue — the land of the Philistines, the enemy of Israel. We are given a glimpse of David's mind during this time, through the 56th Psalm, the title of which reflects his faith, and likewise the spirit of Christ:

"To the chief Musician (the Victor) upon Jonath-elem-rechokim, (as the dove of silence in far off places) Michtam (by the golden faith) of David, when the Philistines took him in Gath."

Psalm 56: Title

He feared capture from Saul, but was now in the land of the Philistines, a people who had no love for Israel, or David, who was known for his victorious battles against them as the record in I Samuel illustrates:

"And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath.

And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

And David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath." I Samuel 21:10-12.

How was he able to keep a right spirit before God during these troubling circumstances? He appealed to God as recorded in Psalm 56, written during this time:

"Be merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up; he fighting daily oppresseth me.

Mine enemies would daily swallow me up: for they be many that fight against me, O thou most High."

Psalm 56:1-2.

A fearful time, yet his response in the 3rd verse shows us the means by which he gained strength:

"What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee." Psalm 56:3.

We can see how easily one could be overcome by fear in such a situation. Yet difficult circumstances are sent by a loving Father to reveal what is truly in our hearts and whether we will turn to him for deliverance. Although we do not know if Psalm 55 was written at the same time as Psalm 56, it too was a time when David was besieged by his enemies and cried out to God:

"... I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise; Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.

My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me.

Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me.

And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest." Psalm 55:2-6.

How interesting that he would say, "Oh that I had wings like a dove!" for in Psalm 56's title he speaks of, "the dove of silence in far off places", translated from the Hebrew word "Jonath-elem-rechokim". The dove is naturally a meek and gentle bird. It is not vicious nor a predator to other birds and can easily be tamed and handled because of its calm and trusting nature. Even today it is known worldwide as a symbol of peace. A dove would remind David of his hoped for dwelling place in the kingdom — a place of peace, made possible by his Greater Son the Messiah. He would find solace and a strengthening of his faith by remembering this hope in the figure of the "dove of silence".

"In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me." Psalm 56:4.

David believed in the eventual resurrection of the body after death and the gift of life eternal in the kingdom, to be granted to those found approved at the judgment seat of Christ. Therefore, he could say in faith, "I will not fear what flesh can do unto me". He trusted in God's help to be close at hand on his behalf, as he repeats further in this psalm:

“In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.” Psalm 56:11.

Our circumstances are not as dire as David’s, yet our minds often are filled with fear and doubt when difficult situations come upon us. If only that same spirit of trust that David displayed, could be in us at all times — how much we could be helped to endure when trying circumstances arise.

In the next Psalm 57, again David is fleeing from the wrath of Saul as indicated by the title:

“To the chief Musician (the Victor) Altaschith (I pray do not destroy) Michtam of David (the pure gold-like faith of David), when he fled from Saul in the cave.”

Psalm 57: Title

Again these words reflect David’s present fear but his trust in the saving power of the Almighty on his behalf:

“Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me.” Psalm 57:1-2.

This trust in God to deliver, was one of David’s most precious attributes. It was also the spirit of the Lord Jesus, who when brought before Pilate, answered not in his own defense (as the dove of silence), putting His trust in God with total submission. This same spirit is reflected by David in Psalm 61 where he again cries unto God:

“Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

For thou has been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.

I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.” Psalm 61:1-4.

This mind enabled David to overcome during difficult circumstances as he allowed his mind to look beyond the present to that precious place God has promised to those who can overcome through a spirit of obedience and submission like the “dove of silence”.

Many of David’s psalms were entitled, “To the chief Musician” or as that translates, “To the Victor” — speaking of Christ, the only one to achieve total victory over his flesh nature. He never surrendered to its fears or temptations, and like a dove, with

mekness and gentleness, never retaliated or relied on the flesh's strength.

What help and comfort David's example leaves for us in these Psalms — displaying a mind and heart that turned to God for deliverance, showing the way we must walk if we hope to share in the rewards bestowed upon those who with dove-like qualities are privileged to be called by His name in the last day.

M.C.S.

"CANST THOU BY SEARCHING FIND OUT GOD?"

(Job 11:7)

Sir Isaac Newton (born 1642) described in his book *Principia Mathematica* his idea of absolute space and time. All things, he said, moved according to a simple set of laws of motion and of a universal law of gravitation. The universe could be viewed as a giant clock, set in motion by the Almighty, but that the forces of nature allowed for continuous movement in a universe governed by absolute time. This theory was accepted by scientists until Albert Einstein (born 1879). He came up with his theory of relativity. He said the speed of light was fixed (186,000 miles per second), but all other factors, including time, must be relative; as the speed of light is independent of the motion of its source. Newton's theories therefore needed modification. For example a planet's orbit around the Sun (it was suggested) is really due to its natural trajectory, so there is no need to invoke Isaac Newton's theory of gravity coming from the Sun and acting on the planet. Newton's description of a fixed law of motion and universal gravitation therefore has been moved to one side. Space and time, it is now said, are linked, i.e. according to Einstein.

Then came Stephen Hawking (born 1942). He has been endeavouring to produce a "unified theory". The joining of the theory of relativity with quantum mechanics as an explanation. Quantum electrodynamics was developed by two United States physicists and a Japanese physicist in 1948. The quantum theory is that energy does not have a continuous range of values, but is instead, absorbed or radiated discontinuously, in multiples of definite, indivisible units called quanta. But just as light has a wave-like motion (composed of photons), so also electrons (energy) has wave-like properties. Energy of course is eminently evident in the Universe, but there is also light, so obviously there is a link between

light and energy. Hawking and others have been trying to unravel the meaning of the stupendous forces at work in the universe. The suggestion has been made that at the beginning of time, there was a singularity; that is a single "point", where a mammoth explosion took place, the outcome of which is seen in the huge whirling energy of the universe, which is also said to be still expanding as a result. So different to what Newton suggested of a giant revolving orderly clock-like motion. Physicists are now saying that they are hoping to get an understanding of the nature of what existed at the very dawn of things, which they say produced all the orbs and the galaxies moving in the heavens. Some of these scientists have actually stated it will not be very long before they have found what was there immediately after that "Big Bang".

How vain they are, and how ignorant. If they were to study God's holy word they would be saved from a lot of hopeless endeavour. They think they can fathom out God, but this is an absolute impossibility. "Canst thou by searching find out God?" This is the question the scripture poses. The Hebrew word translated into the English word "searching" is "cheqer" and means enumeration, i.e. to number. Well, men are using what is termed "higher mathematics" in this searching; which the Spirit declared all those years ago, they would so do. The scripture also states, "Thus saith the LORD: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel ---." (Jeremiah 31:37). The seed of the Israel of God of course, will never be cast off; nor will men ever be able to measure the infinite.

On the subject of the beginning of the universe, the truth is, that in the infinite sense, IT NEVER BEGAN. This is something that is difficult for our finite minds to grasp, for we are subject to beginnings and endings; and this good earth of ours and its environment certainly had a beginning. But when it comes to the great Creator; "--- the LORD GOD of Israel (is) from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen." (Psalm 41:13). What is seen in the High Heavens manifests the Infinity of the Supreme being; and it is the folly of man to think this can be searched out.

A BIBLE CLASS

“Whoso Is Simple, Let Him Turn In Hither”

(Proverbs 9:4 & 16)

Our consideration in Proverbs looks at a verse that is mentioned twice in the ninth chapter. Unlike many of the other proverbs which are a collection of individual thoughts contrasting the qualities of spirit with the detriments of man’s flesh nature, this chapter seems entire in its theme of wisdom, revealing how it is scorned by the foolish and sought by the godly. The purpose of Solomon’s proverbs is made clear in the first chapter:

“To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:”

Proverbs 1:2-5.

Looking at our verse under consideration we read:

“Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding she saith to him, . . .”

Proverbs 9:4 & 16.

This word “simple” comes from a word meaning “subject to being allured or seduced”, giving the thought of how the flesh can be led away by temptation. The first twelve verses of the ninth proverb are an appeal by the Spirit, showing the value and help obtained through the wisdom which comes from above, which can build one up in the hope of eternal life by giving knowledge to turn away from the flesh and its enticements. To the man seeking life through following the spirit’s way is said:

“Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.

Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.”

Proverbs 9:4-6.

Throughout the proverbs wisdom is often spoken of as a virtuous woman, while the foolish or godless are referred to as a strange woman, estranged from the spirit, and attracted only to the flesh, which is turned aside by temptation, out of the way of life. She offers those things prohibited and taken in secret as a special

enticement, but with disastrous results:

“Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,
Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.
But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.” Proverbs 9:16-18.

Solomon himself was enticed and lured away from the spirit’s ways through the influence of his many strange wives who did not serve God:

“But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians and Hittites;
Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love.
And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.”

I Kings 11:1-3.

He started out his reign with a good heart, wanting only wisdom and knowledge in order to rule Israel justly. However, as he grew older and was gradually lured into the ways of his strange wives and their gods, his excesses grew and he heavily taxed the people in order to support the opulent lifestyle he had created for himself. So great was his oppression, that at his death, the people beseeched his heir Rehoboam to remove the burdens of taxation laid upon them by Solomon:

“Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee.”

I Kings 12:4.

Solomon lost his wisdom when he lost his fear and reverence for God and gave his heart to the multiplying of wives, horses, chariots and riches instead of to the pursuit of the spirit’s knowledge, in the path of life.

His father David, had failed grievously in the past when tempted by the allures of the world, but his spirit was one which repented and turned to God for help and strength to prevent being dominated by his flesh nature:

“Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright,

and I shall be innocent from the great transgression."

Psalm 19:13.

Who is simple? We all are because we are liable to be led away and enticed by the desires of our flesh nature. The question we must determine is where will we turn when enticed? To the lure of the world, or will we turn aside to the path of righteousness which may bring momentary affliction to try our hearts, but does hold out the promise of life eternal?

M.C.S.

A NEWSPAPER SKETCH 1878

An outline of the work of Dr. J. Thomas

Though this religious body's name may not be so generally known in the Christian world, yet undoubtedly, many of their beliefs have spread themselves far and wide. One rather noticeable feature in this sect is that it is spread in small communities throughout Scotland, England, Ireland, America and the Colonies, keeping up intercourse with each other; and though the majority of their members are comparatively poor, vigorous exertions are by them put forth in order to diffuse their views. They have no ordained minister, but all, to the best of their abilities, work in the cause gratuitously. They profess to take the Scriptures alone as their standard of faith. None are allowed to join themselves to this community without a thorough knowledge and appreciation of the things they set forth; and, no doubt, the Scripture study and search necessary to enable converts so to do, may have a considerable tendency in restricting the growth of their meetings. - - -

The founder of this body was the late John Thomas, M.D., who was born in London in 1805, and who, after emigrating to America (returned to visit Britain on three occasions; 1848: 1862: and 1868). His father was a pastor among the Independents, and he himself obtained his diploma, and realised tolerable success in the metropolis as a medical practitioner. That he was an able linguist his works bear testimony; and he is considered an authority, especially in the Greek and Hebrew languages. During his stay in America, he was successively editor of the following periodicals:- The Apostolic Advocate, The Investigator, The Herald of the Future Age, and The Herald of the Kingdom.

Dr. Thomas --- on a visit to Britain in 1848 — that memorable

year in which all Europe was in a state of excitement because of the political events transpiring — lectured on the signs of the times in reference to prophecy, to thousands of people in various towns in England and Scotland. He says himself in his preface to *Elpis Israel* (which he wrote in 1849 on account of a public request made to him in Edinburgh and Glasgow, that what he had spoken should be printed), "in order that the reader may be able to acquit him of being a trader in religion;" that "he had left his home, 4000 miles in the south-west; that he had travelled twice through Britain, delivered 170 addresses to the people; sat up early and late conversing with them on the things of the kingdom; and written this work that he may leave a testimony behind him; and as yet has received no more than four shillings over his travelling expenses."

The subject matter of *Elpis Israel* is national, not sectarian, and treats of a nation and of its civil and ecclesiastical institutions in a past and future age. The meaning of the title is "Israel's Hope"; and the idea, it would appear, is taken from Paul's words to the chief men of the Jews at Rome, that for the "hope of Israel he was bound with a chain." The work professes to be "an Exposition of the Kingdom of God: with reference to the Time of the End and Age to Come." The prophecies of Daniel and John, as well as the minor prophets are commented upon, quotations made from various historians in order to prove the fulfilment of certain prophetic events, and statements made as to what must happen in the near future.

A Remnant footnote

The above newspaper report about Dr. J. Thomas reveals an implied respect for him, and for his efforts. He must have behaved in such a way during his lecture tours, which were reported from time to time, as to give no cause for adverse comments.

R. ROBERTS ON THE WORK OF DR. J. THOMAS (1875)

We hold to the doctrines set forth in the Dr.'s writings, NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE THERE, but because we believe them to be the truth as set forth in the Holy Oracles. Nevertheless, as everybody — even Mr. Magruder — professes to stand on the Scriptures, it would be no indication of our position in relation to such to say we stand by them. Our reference to the writings of Dr. Thomas is a convenient one, as showing what we conceive the teaching of the Scriptures to be, as opposed to others. Our infatuation is to be

certain, on the evidence that Dr. Thomas has brought the truth to light. It is an infatuation that is flexible under the strict laws of reason. It is an infatuation of the sort Paul was accused of when he rejoined "I am not mad, most noble Festus." It is an infatuation which consists of things "most surely believed" (Luke 1:1); and we are not to be frightened out of this full assurance of faith by these scare cries about papal infallibility. If the matter were not one admitting of open test, a positiveness of conviction might be stigmatised as "dogmatic infatuation;" but with the Bible in our hands, it only requires due diligence in making their acquaintance, and the exercise of moderate powers of judgment, to be able to arrive at just as positive, and reasonably positive a conclusion as to whether Dr. Thomas has developed the truth, as we come to in matters of lesser moment, where there is no danger of incurring the charge of "dogmatic infatuation" in expressing ourselves quite strongly.

"But then" says Mr. Magruder, "which of Dr. Thomas's writings do you mean? He has written voluminously, and in some parts of his writings he teaches things which in other parts he abandons." This is not the question of an ingenuous mind, it is a cavil. It does not raise a practical or a real difficulty. Dr. Thomas started as a Campbellite, and of course, wrote things in the beginning which he finally saw were not according to the Scriptures. The process of getting rid of early bias (which however, was wonderfully slight at all times, as his early writings bear witness), was gradual; and when we speak of "finality", we cannot be candidly supposed to mean that which was not final. Mr. Magruder says we are blindly committed to all the Dr. ever wrote. It was necessary for him to say this in order to have ground for his cavil: but it is not true in either member of the sentence. We are not "blindly" committed to any part. It is with open eyes we "commit" ourselves to the truth advocated by Dr. Thomas because we see it to be such. And our committal refers not to the premature impressions of his early days, when as yet his knowledge of the Scriptures was incomplete. Finality is the upshot of a process; and if Mr. Magruder would like specifically to know what portion of Dr. Thomas's writings exhibit the truth in its final and perfect phase, we would mention Eureka, without at the same time meaning to intimate that his other works are not entitled to almost equal confidence. It is impossible to satisfy the captious; but this definition will be understood by every earnest mind.

The Remnant's comment on the above

Eureka, to which R. Roberts refers, was a tremendous work. As Dr. Thomas came to its completion he wrote:-

“Behold, I come suddenly; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” But how can they be kept, or treasured up, and observed, if they are not understood? (this was about the book of Revelation). It is the object of the labour spread over the past twelve years in the writing of this exposition now being concluded, to supply the information necessary to a scriptural understanding of the prophecy that its sayings may be kept.”

But there has been further criticism recently, voiced in the following words:-

“It is a tragedy that the area of the brotherhood that so many look to for guidance on these issues is so steeped in veneration of the Pioneers’ and successive Christadelphian magazine Editors’ supposed infallibility.”

Be that as it may, the Pioneers were against such an attitude developing. Dr. Thomas was careful to underline that some of the things of which he wrote could not be clearly defined. On page 600 of Eureka Volume 3 he wrote:-

“It is impossible to speak with certainty of details not revealed. When we touch upon them, we speak only of what may probably be the course of things leading to a specified result.”

And on page 168 of Eureka Volume 2 he wrote:-

“I am satisfied that in this third seal FAMINE is not indicated by the colour of the horse. The reader will therefore be so good as to run his pen through the word “famine” in line 16 of our “Chronological Tableau of the Apostasy” on page 428, Volume 1. The colour indicates --- depression of mind, from any kind of calamity --- .”

Dr. Thomas then, was ever ready to learn over time, and adjust. R. Roberts’ comments, written in 1875, are very sound, and fully in keeping with the Doctor’s own inclinations and desire in relation to his own efforts. But what cannot be denied is the great significance of the foundation work which Dr. Thomas laid, which is particularly seen in Eureka.

IN THE BEGINNING

The following is a letter from one of our readers asking what we believe about the Creation:-

"Forgive me if I appear a little obtuse: I am not sure as to whether you and also R.R. are assuming a belief in what is often called a 'recent earth' — i.e. something of the order of 6,000 years of existence (see Remnant Mag. for June 99, p108 - p112).

Could you kindly "set me right"?"

The Remnant's reply

You are right. We believe that it is approximately 6000 years since the Beginning. This is what the scriptures tell us in "the genealogies". The earth "was without form, and void ---" when the creative work of the Most High began to bring light, which brought about the first day. On the sixth day Adam was created, followed by Eve.

Modern science calls this a mythical story. But Jesus did not think so.

"Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female." (Matthew 19:4).

The Apostle Paul also believed in the veracity of the Genesis account.

"For Adam was first formed, then Eve." (1 Timothy 2:13).

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

(2 Corinthians 11:3).

Jude proclaims his belief in the genealogies.

"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these --- ." (Jude verse 14).

Do we believe Christ? Do we believe the Apostle Paul, who had the Spirit? Or do we believe science?

Some "believers" try to accommodate science by endeavouring to make it appear that the simple truth of the Genesis account has a metaphorical aspect. We cannot accept this. We believe that the serpent was literal, that Adam and Eve were literal, that the 6 day creation is literal.

Jesus declared that "he (the devil) was a murderer from the beginning --- ." (John 8:44). Obviously Jesus believed literally. The Apostle John writes "--- the devil sinneth from the beginning." (1 John 3:8). He goes on to say "--- Cain, was of that wicked one, and slew his brother." (1 John 3:12). So John also believed that the

Genesis account is literal, the serpent philosophy commencing a long history of evil deeds.

There have been some who have said that Adam was not the first man, or that there were others at the same time. This overlooks or discards the clear testimony of the Law:-

“--- the most High divided to the nations their inheritance,
when he separated the sons of Adam ---.”

(Deuteronomy 32:8).

We believe that all mankind, whatever their appearance, have descended from Adam. Adam (and Eve) was the start of all the diversity of race presently seen.

The Apostle Paul says that his work was:-

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

(Ephesians 3:9).

This was a wonderful purpose from the Beginning that could not fail, for God DOES NOT fail. To say that God had a purpose with the earth, and a creative work in it before Adam, is to imply that He made an order of life that failed. We cannot accept that this is an explanation we can put forward to accommodate science, falsely so called, without scriptural permission to do so, which is not there.

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

“--- disobedient to parents --- unholy --- incontinent,
fierce ---.”

(2 Timothy 3:2-3).

Such perilous times are predicted for these last days. Through the prophecy of Isaiah it is declared:-

“--- their works are works of iniquity, and the act of
violence is in their hands.

Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent
blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and
destruction are in their paths.”

(Isaiah 59:6-7).

This situation (says Isaiah) is at a time when:-

“--- truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh
himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him
---.”

(Isaiah 59:15).

But it will not be allowed to continue, for:-

“According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury
to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies; to the islands
(the nations) he will repay recompence.

So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and

his glory from the rising of the sun.”

(Isaiah 59:18-19).

Recent news reports have shocked the world. A year ago four pupils and a teacher at an Arkansas school were shot dead by two young schoolboys (who had an arsenal of weapons at their disposal). The massacre by older boys at the school in Colorado was also very shocking. The list of school tragedies has been increasing. Pearl, Mississippi; Paducah, Kentucky; Springfield, Oregon; and the question is, where will the next tragedy take place? The following statistics reveal how great the problem is:-

Handguns kill 60 in the United States every day, including 12 children.

The citizens of the U.S. own 211 million guns, a third of which are handguns.

A new handgun is produced every 20 seconds and is used to shoot someone every two minutes.

Each day handguns are used in over 17 hundred crimes.

Only one in 44 gun fatalities in the U.S. involves self defence against an intruder.

More people are (for example) killed in Los Angeles by guns than are killed in car accidents.

A newspaper comment has argued:-

“The gun lobby says that the killers are not the weapons but the people who use them. It seems not to consider how many lives might be saved if trigger-happy madmen never had a rifle or pistol. They’d still be crazed. But they would be much less dangerous.” --- “the only way forward is to make the crime more difficult to commit.”

Crime in the United States is probably no greater than anywhere else, but because of the proliferation of arms the crime situation is more lethal.

In the United Kingdom where hand guns are banned, similar tragedies in schools to those in the U.S. have occurred. In April bullets began to fly through a school window at a Gloucester College but fortunately they missed the 16 and 17 year old girls in the class. A teenager was arrested two hours later in the college grounds and another boy was held at a house. The police took away an air pistol and ball-bearing ammunition from the home of the second boy.

Then there was the case of a killing of a student at a College in Kent. Two teenage boys had stabbed to death another boy, who was supposed to be their best friend. They then proceeded to burn his cut up body in the school grounds. The Judge who dealt with these evil

young men commented that "both had become desensitized to violence after watching films" --- which had "served to fuel (their) fantasies and isolated (them) from counter-balancing influences." One of the films was called "The Evil Dead", in which a body is carried into woods and buried in a shallow grave.

The world, however, is now so taken over by television and the film industry, that there is as much reluctance about curbing such programmes, as there is hesitation in the United States about curbing guns. In fact there has been an attempt to deflect the blame from the film industry onto "pop" music. At the time of writing an official inquiry has been set up to assess the impact of violence in "pop" music on children and young adults.

But let it not be thought that there is less violence in other countries. Note the following advice from travel agents:-

"Visitors to Russia are advised to 'exercise caution' because of the threat of bombings, murder and kidnappings."

"Brazil, Guatemala and Venezuela are all places where tourists are advised to 'dress down' to avoid muggings."

"Argentina: An increase in armed robbery, theft and violent crime, particularly in Buenos Aires. Hotel burglary is common, as well as petty crimes, such as pickpocketing and purse-snatching. Visitors should dress down and carry a minimum amount of money. Avoid isolated or poorly-lit areas, particularly at night."

"Brazil: Frequent attacks on tourists in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, and muggers are often armed. Car-jacking is on the increase, and credit-card fraud is prevalent."

"Cambodia: Kidnapping and armed crime on the increase in Phnom Penh."

"Malaysia: Gang robberies with firearms, and other violent crimes have increased significantly in the past year. Snatch thieves are a problem in Kuala Lumpur."

"Thailand: Motorcycle gangs operate in Bangkok, assaulting and robbing pedestrians."

"Indonesia: Postpone all non-essential travel."

"India: Bomb explosions in Delhi. Avoid Jammu and Kashmir."

"Pakistan: High crime rates and ethnic and sectarian violence. Armed car-jackings and kidnappings."

"Sri Lanka: Terrorist unrest in the north and east."

"South Africa: Car-jacking a problem in Johannesburg. Rising crime has made some areas no-go zones for white-people."

"Kenya: Muggings and armed attacks are frequent, particularly in Nairobi and Mombasa.

"Egypt: Threat of terrorist attacks, though security has been increased."

"Turkey: Upsurge in political violence."

"Mexico: Kidnappings for ransom a growing problem."

"Peru: An upsurge in crime, which includes muggings, armed robberies and kidnappings. Attacks on tourists at night are becoming more common."

Can anyone doubt this world situation of violence is a fulfilment of Bible prophecy? It is a sign of the end; of the coming Heavenly intervention to deliver the world from its evil.

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

As responses to our offer of the Remnant magazine continue, we are grateful for this blessing. Our prayer is that it may continue to prosper and we rejoice in the guidance given.

As the summer weather allows enjoyment of His creation, we look forward to the approaching annual Summer Outing, God willing.

M.C.S.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.00 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 7.15 p.m.

Letters of enquiry etc. which we receive from time to time indicate that our magazine and its articles are thought provoking. This is an encouragement to us, for that is the intention of our work.