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The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

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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 INCENSE ALTAR

God's plan for the tabernacle, His dwelling place with Israel, as they were to journey from Sinai to the land promised to Abraham, is revealed in recent readings in Exodus. It was given of God as He spoke to Moses on Mt. Sinai:

"... let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.

According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." Exodus 25:8-9.

Israel was a privileged people, as God did indeed dwell with them, plainly seen in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. He continued to dwell with them for the 40 years of their wandering in the wilderness before finally being allowed to enter that promised land, under Joshua. To the faithful in Israel, this divine pattern spoke of His purpose to be accomplished through His Son, Jesus Christ, who would come as their promised Redeemer.

In our reading this morning, we have been shown one part of the tabernacle — the incense altar — as God spoke to Moses:

"And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon . . ." Exodus 30:1.

God then revealed to Moses exactly how it was to be made:

"... of shittim wood shalt thou make it.

A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof: foursquare shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same.

And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold . . . and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about.

And two golden rings shalt thou make to it . . . and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal.

And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold." Exodus 30:1-5.

This incense altar was only 18" square and 36" high. It was covered with gold, as was all the furniture in the holy and most holy places, including the boards that made up the sides of the tabernacle. The gold would reflect the light of the candlestick, causing a golden glow inside the tabernacle.

Where was this altar to be placed? The divine instruction to Moses was very clear:

"... thou shalt put it before the vail that is by the ark of the

testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee.” Exodus 30:6.

It was placed just before the veil separating the most holy place. How was the altar to be used? Again, God’s instruction was very clear:

“... Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning; when he dresseth the lamps (candlestick), he shall burn incense upon it.

And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.

Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon.” Exodus 30:7-9.

It was particularly reserved for the burning of incense before the veil. As the incense perpetually burned, the holy place would be filled with the sweet smell thereof; it would also permeate the most holy place, filling the tabernacle with its sweetness. The garments of the high priest would also absorb the sweet smell of the incense as he went about his work in the tabernacle. How would he burn the incense, morning and evening? No doubt, he took coals from the brasen altar, where the fire was always burning (Leviticus 6:13). He would put the coals upon the golden incense altar, and carefully place the incense upon the coals. As the incense slowly burned, its aroma would permeate the whole tabernacle, pleasing to God.

The incense itself was to be carefully made in accordance with the Almighty’s instruction to Moses:

“... Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight:

And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure and holy:

And thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy.”

Exodus 30:34-36.

Spices are greatly valued. We read of the Queen of Sheba, who brought “spices, and very much gold, and precious stones . . .” (1 Kings 10:2), as gifts to Solomon. These four precious spices were to be beaten very small and “tempered together” by an apothecary — one skilled in working with spices. We might ask: Where did the

apothecary obtain these spices? We find the answer in God's command to Moses, regarding the materials necessary for building the tabernacle:

"Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering . . .

Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense." Exodus 25:2, 6.

The spices were given by those of Israel whose hearts were willing, and so they freely offered of their goods for the house of the Lord, moved by reverence and gratitude for the opportunity to have a part in that house.

Let us look a little more closely as to how these four sweet spices were transformed into a sweet incense, ". . . holy for the LORD" (Exodus 30:37). First, the separate spices were beaten very small, even as dust. They were then "tempered together" (verse 35), or as the word means — to rub together, as in a mortar and pestle. In so doing, the characteristics of each sweet spice were blended, causing them to be absorbed in the carefully "tempered" mixture. As the incense was burned on the altar, each contributed to the overall sweet smell, each part having lost its individual characteristics as it was beaten small and "tempered together."

Paul used this tempering process to describe the oneness of the body of Christ:

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

For the body is not one member, but many.

But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him . . . The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: . . . but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked."

I Corinthians 12: 12, 14, 18, 21, 22, 24.

God's tempering process mingles and blends the qualities of each member, making each a necessary part of the body, yet contributing to the function of the whole body, as Paul expressed:

"Now (after tempering) ye are the body of Christ, and

members in particular.” (Vs. 27).
 “Particular” implies a share, a part, a necessary member contributing to the overall function of the body, as its individuality is blended into the whole. Such was the function of the four sweet spices in the incense burned upon the incense altar — giving forth a sweet smell, pleasing to God, as the fire (spirit) consumed it.

When we think of a sweet smell filling the house of God, our minds go to Mary of Bethany. Mary entered into her brother’s house only six days before Jesus’ death (John 12:1). While Jesus sat at the table with Lazarus, Martha and Mary:

“Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.” John 12:3.

The sweet smell of Mary’s loving act upon Jesus caused the whole house to be filled with the pleasing scent. However, Judas Iscariot objected, saying:

“Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?”

This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.” Verses 5-6.

Jesus replied:

“... Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.” Verse 7.

Mary knew that Jesus must die, so she had kept the spikenard to anoint His body; but she was now moved to anoint His feet (work), as an evidence of her faith in Jesus’ soon-to-come victory in dying on the cross — the Victor over His flesh nature. Can we see how her act of trust and love filled the house with a sweet savor, not spoiled by the evilness of Judas’ thinking?

As we contemplate the purpose of this altar and its incense, we think also of the day of atonement — a holy feast in Israel. Once a year the high priest went into the most holy place to make atonement, first for himself, and then for his people. As he entered, he was required to:

“... take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar (incense altar), before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil: And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that

is upon the testimony (ark), that he die not:

And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle the blood with his finger seven times.”
Leviticus 16:12-14.

When he came out of the most holy place, having made atonement with the sprinkled blood of the sacrifice, he was required to:

“... go out unto the altar (incense altar) that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about.”

Leviticus 16:18.

What an important part in the atonement was the incense altar, and the incense burnt thereon! God told Moses on Sinai:

“... Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the LORD.”

Exodus 30:10.

This work of the high priest on the day of atonement pointed forward to the work of the High Priest, Jesus Christ. Through the crucifying of His flesh nature, he could enter into the most holy place to make atonement, first for Himself, and then for His people. They would perceive God’s purpose revealed in His tabernacle, His dwelling place, and from their hearts, would willingly offer for the building of the tabernacles, including the sweet spices used for the incense perpetually burning upon the incense altar.

God further commanded concerning the day of atonement:

“... whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.”

Leviticus 23:29.

To be “afflicted” involves a humbling, a gentling of oneself, and submitting to God — all needful for atonement through the work of His High Priest, Jesus Christ.

The day of atonement was to be on the tenth day of the seventh month of every year, followed on the 15th day of the month by the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel would dwell in booths, remembering the mercy of God:

“That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD (Yahweh) your God.”

Leviticus 23:43.

The feast of tabernacles looked forward to the time of gathering all who, having afflicted their souls, are atoned for by the death of the High Priest.

As we keep this in mind, Brethren and Sisters, let us rejoice in the hope of being gathered to make up the perfected body of Christ; tempered together, each member adding to the sweet smell which will fill the house of God eternally — the fire of the Spirit having accomplished its work. Let us meditate upon this hope and govern our lives now in a way that is pleasing to Him.

J.A.DeF.

A MESSAGE TO THE FRIENDS OF GOD

A study from the gospel according to Luke finds the beloved physician writing to “most excellent Theophilus”, to further his study in the word of God. Theophilus’ name translates as “friend of God”, and how fitting in God’s great wisdom that this record is left for the help of all those struggling through obedience, to be known as friends of God.

Luke’s instruction begins with the birth of John the Baptist and concludes with the appearance of the Lord Jesus to His disciples after His resurrection. He then picks up this thread in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, detailing the apostles’ ministry after Jesus’ ascension. Why did he write all of this to Theophilus?

“It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus.

That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou has been instructed.” Luke 1:3-4.

Theophilus, was being taught the gospel — the good news of the kingdom of God through the name of Jesus Christ — learning of the wondrous hope contained in the word of God which lies in store for all who seek after it. From the beginning fall in Eden, through the promises extended to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to the birth, ministry and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, the thread of Truth is exposed to those whom the Spirit calls to obedience. Those not called, who read the Word, may be moved by the inspiring examples of faith and courage, but without a sure foundation of belief in the Lord Jesus and repentance which leads to baptism into His body, there can be no lasting spiritual benefit.

In the last chapter of Luke, the Lord Jesus instructed the disciples to return to Jerusalem and there await the gift of the Holy Spirit which would come upon them — a measure of God’s power to be given that they might increase in understanding and go forth to spread the gospel, armed with the power to do miracles of healing in His name.

However, their last question to Him as He prepared to ascend unto His Father, displayed a great lack of perception in what lay ahead for them, and why they needed to grow in understanding as they asked:

“Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” Acts 1:6.

Their understanding would be enriched by the power of the Spirit

at Pentecost, teaching them of all they would be called upon to suffer in the spreading of His word not only to Israel but to all the world as ambassadors of Christ. They longed as we do today, for the kingdom of God to be established. However, over 1900 years have elapsed from that time, and they continue to wait from the grave.

Paul encouraged his brethren, those friends of God in Thessalonica who waited in the same trust, as he wrote:

“But ye brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”

I Thessalonians 5:4-6.

To be a friend of God is to be a child of light — not walking in or fellowshiping the ways of darkness or error, but through constant study and prayer, learning how best to walk in obedience before Him. Paul left specific instructions how this could be achieved:

“See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

Rejoice evermore.

Pray without ceasing.

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Quench not the Spirit.

Despise not prophesyings.

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil.”

I Thessalonians 5:15-22.

We have been instructed to walk after Christ's example during our time of probation as we wait (as did the apostles) for His return. In these latter days we have been privileged to see unfolding many signs spoken of in the scriptures which must be in place before His return — yet we still wait. We are told His return will come as a thief in the night and we must be prepared, for no man knows the hour.

If we knew a thief was coming to break into our home at midnight, how vigilant we would be. There would be no time to relax or sleep, we would be on full alert to have everything in place so as not to be surprised. How important likewise to be spiritually ready for His return, arming ourselves through scriptural study and prayer as well as examining ourselves critically, knowing the

often wayward direction of our natural inclinations if left unchecked.

Peter's words as he waited in hope, inspire all those longing to be known as friends of God, when he said:

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
II Peter 3:9.

However, he goes on to warn of that day coming as a "thief in the night" when the old systems of this world will be destroyed and replaced with a righteous government of justice and peace:

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."
II Peter 3:3-14.

M.C.S.

NOAH'S DAUGHTERS

Noah and the Flood is looked upon in these "modern" times as a mythological tale. Questions are posed such as:-

"Where did Noah get the material from to build such a large vessel, to accommodate the various species of living creatures that depend upon air to breathe?"

"Where did Noah obtain the expertise and the equipment to build a ship which would be able to withstand such a deluge?"

Obviously the thinking behind such questions regard Noah's times (if he did exist) as primitive and backward. As for an universal flood, it is rejected as an impossibility, or at the most a mere local inundation.

There was perhaps somewhat less scepticism a century ago. Note the following observations on historical findings in the Middle East:-

"Ur of the Chaldees, according to Genesis 11:28-31, was the original home of Terah, Abram's father. The site of the city of Ur was first discovered by Captain Taylor, who carried out excavations at Tall al Mugayyar for the Trustees of the British Museum in 1854. This site lies about 2 miles away from the most westerly branch of the Euphrates, just north of the point where that river begins to lose itself in the marshes at the head of the Persian Gulf. Its name, Tall al Mugayyar, 'the pitched ruin' seems to have been given to it because the Arabs found pitch, or rather bitumen, between the bricks which still stand in walls built four thousand years ago. --- Tradition stated that, after the Flood, Babylonia was ruled in turn from Kish, Erech, and Ur. C. L. Woolley, at Ur, has discovered there early Sumerian royal tombs (dating before 3000 B.C.) with rich treasures of gold, found with the bodies of the royal dead --- beautifully chased and fluted gold vases --- mosaic work in lapislazuli and shell --- pictures (show) a prince and his court in war, and --- in peace ---. In the peaceful scene --- he is seen feasting with his courtiers, while a musician with a lyre and a singing or dancing girl entertains them. Below, peasants bring animals and loads to the court ---, the date of this priceless illustration of early Babylonian life, which is for the Sumerians what the Luttrell Psalter is for the medieval English, is before 3000 B.C."

Such comments reveal proof of the sophistication of times which some would regard as primitive and crude. However, we would query the date given; believing the Bible timescale, which makes it about 2000 B.C.

Dr. Thomas made a valuable comment about the time of Noah as follows:-

“ - - A son was born to Lamech, the grandson of Enoch, whom he named Noah; that is, Comfort, saying, ‘This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.’ This was the hope of those who remained faithful of the sons of Seth. They laboured in hope of a translation into a rest from their labours, when the curse should be removed from the earth. In process of time, Noah was ‘warned of God of things not seen as yet’. Noah believed them; and God BY HIS SPIRIT’ in him, ‘went and preached to the spirits (now) in prison’ (I Peter 3:19), that is, to the Antediluvians ‘who were disobedient in the days of Noah.’ He warned them of the coming flood, which would ‘destroy them from the earth’; and proved to them his own conviction of its certainty by ‘preparing an ark for the safety of his own house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith’. But, his faith thus made perfect by his works, made no salutary impression upon his contemporaries. ‘They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not till the flood came, and took them all away’, leaving only eight persons OF THE SONS OF SETH alive. Thus was the mingled seed of Seth and Cain exterminated from the earth. Cain’s race became utterly extinct, and those only of Seth remained, who were upright in their generations, and who walked with God. The distinction of seeds was temporarily suspended. The generation of vipers was extinct; but sin in the flesh survived - .”

In context with the above consideration, how interesting is the following news report, quoting the words of a Professor of Oxford University:

“I have found DNA in skeletons thousands of years old and exactly the same genes in my own friends. And I have discovered, to my astonishment, that we are all connected

to only a handful of women - - -."

Well, of course this is the case, as the Bible so clearly reveals.

"In the sixhundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened." (Genesis 7:11).

"In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them into the ark."

(Genesis 7:13).

"These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations; AND BY THESE WERE THE NATIONS DIVIDED IN THE EARTH AFTER THE FLOOD."

(Genesis 10:32).

Yes, all the peoples of the earth are descended from the three daughters in law of Noah, even as the Oxford Professor has concluded.

CHRIST'S COMING (R.R. 1866)

There is a great event coming. Jesus Christ is about to appear on earth — not to set the world on fire, not to bring about what is poetically but falsely depicted as

"The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds".

but, in the language of Paul, when addressing the Athenians on Mar's Hill, to "judge the world in righteousness", — to cause the glory of God, in the sense of the intelligent appreciation, the affectionate submission of men to him — to fill the earth as the waters cover the sea, first, by the coercion of the race in judgment, and secondly by their illumination through the law to emanate from Jerusalem as the metropolis of the world in the coming age. The event itself is undoubted. Jesus expressly says "Behold I come as a thief" (Rev. 16:15). He will come as a thief in two senses; he will come stealthily and without being expected, and he will be in the world before people know it. It will be a considerable time before people will understand what has happened - - - there is to elapse after Christ's arrival in the earth, a period of at least forty years, during which the process of subjugation will go on. This may appear a long time for Omnipotence to take in establishing His kingdom; but in the language of Isaiah, (ch. 26:9) the inhabitants of the earth have to be taught righteousness by judgment. This requires

time. It took forty years of severe discipline in the wilderness, to transform the nation of Israel from a rabble of barbarians and idolators, into a submissive people, prepared and fit to occupy the land of promise; and it will take a similar period of bitter experience, to effect such a revolution in the mental habits and disposition of the earth's population, to fit them for the jurisdiction of Messiah and His associates, the saints --- . We are on the eve of the greatest event the world has ever seen, namely the approaching arrival in the world of a man — not a mere man, but yet a real man — a man as real as we are, but perfect as we are not; a man omnipotent as we are not; a man immortal as we are not; a man armed with authority and power to bring the world to judgment, which none of us possesses; a man endued with the capacity to righteously and effectually wield a universal sceptre, which the greatest man that has ever lived was unable to do; a man who will stand invincibly on the earth as Emmanuel — God with us; a man who, on his arrival, will summon the present holders of power to give up the reins of government to Him, and in default of their submission (as we are told they will refuse to submit), will break them to pieces, and take the power, which will be "His great power, and rein." This will be a great event, and a necessary event. God created a name and a tradition, for Himself by antagonising Pharaoh's obstinacy in a series of operations. This tradition has outlived all time, and exists now over a greater area of people than at any former time. But it is becoming weak and dim, and morally inoperative; and God's purpose is to rescue and recall it, and establish it in the world in a form and with an effect, such as the world has never witnessed before. This He will do by the great revolution to be inaugurated at the appearing of Christ. Christ could wrest the power from the hands of kings in a moment; but He won't. He will enter into conflict with them, and the conflict will be a long, and a bloody, and a terrible one, and will result in the people becoming aware of whom it is they have for their antagonist, and what the object of His antagonism is. This knowledge will operate healthily in the long run, and result, after much slaughter, in the effectual bringing down of the pride and rebellion of mankind, and their submission to the righteous edicts, which will issue forth for their enlightenment and regulation. Having accomplished this object, He will then in Himself, and in those whom He shall associate with Him, in the high position of "Kings and Priests unto God", vest the universal government of the world, and inaugurate the era of righteousness

and peace, which has long been the hope, but never the lot of mankind.

Footnote

Well over a century has elapsed since R. Roberts spoke the above words at a lecture. To some, the words "Jesus Christ is about to appear", may seem to have been mistaken. But this is not so, when the creative time scale is taken into consideration. But if near at the time of R. Roberts, how much nearer now? And how much greater is the threat to the welfare of mankind, through the inventive developments that have taken place since his days?

A BIBLE CLASS

"TAKE HEED . . . LEST THAT DAY COME UPON YOU
UNAWARES"

Luke 21:34

"That day" — we know there is a day coming when Jesus Christ will return to gather those who are responsible to His judgment seat. Those accounted faithful will reign with Him as kings and priests in His kingdom. The apostles looked for that kingdom, as they asked Jesus:

" . . . wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." Acts 1:6-7.

Earlier Jesus did respond to their question:

" . . . Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?" Luke 21:7.

He then gave signs which would foretell His return to accomplish His Father's purpose. We all know these signs which point to His soon return, but we do not know exactly when. Jesus also made this clear in His Revelation to John:

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." Revelation 16:15.

Those who long for His return will be watching, hoping, yet fearing lest they be found wanting at His time of judgment. Peter helps us to be more prepared for that day:

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in

the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and . . . the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” II Peter 3:10.

The old heavens and the old earth shall come to an end, as the new heavens and earth of the kingdom age are brought about. Peter continues in warning:

“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” II Peter 3:11-14.

Indeed, what manner of persons ought we to be? Jesus helps us by His parable of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five were foolish (Matthew 25). The wise had oil in their lamps, while the foolish having no oil, were not prepared for the coming of the bridegroom. At midnight, while they all slept, there was a cry that the bridegroom was coming, and they that were “ready” — or as the word means, prepared:

“. . . went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.” Matthew 25:10.

Jesus’ teaching by this parable was:

“Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.” Matthew 25:13.

We read of the bride of Christ as revealed to John:

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; . . .

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” Revelation 21:1-2.

This holy city is “the bride, the Lamb’s wife” (Revelation 21:9). She is prepared, made ready, being wise, having oil, and adorned, not outwardly, but as Peter speaks:

“. . . let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” I Peter 3:4.

Those who are striving to be prepared, look forward to His coming in the hope revealed for us by His prophet Isaiah:

“I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garment of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” Isaiah 61:10.

The key to this great hope and mercy is being prepared, made ready — in mind, in heart, and in spirit — now in our time of probation, for when He comes it will be too late: “. . . the door was shut” (Matthew 25:10).

We have been given “signs” of His coming. As we see them appearing in the earth, do we give heed to Jesus’ warning?

“. . . then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads: for your redemption draweth nigh.” Luke 21:27-28.

That day is coming — we know it! But do we diligently, constantly have it in mind, in hope, and in prayers that we may be prepared? Jesus again warns us:

“. . . take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.”

Luke 21:34.

How easily we can be distracted by the cares of this life, and lose our concentration upon the hope of eternal life, with the result “that day . . . come upon (us) unawares.” “Unawares” is made up of two words: (1) not; and (2) appear, shine, or be seen. That day must be a shining light in our life, the hope set before us, motivating all that is done. Jesus further encourages us in that determination:

“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” Luke 21:36.

It is our hope and earnest prayer to stand at His right hand on His day of judgment, and hear His words

“. . . Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Matthew 25:34.

Let us live each day, striving to be truly ready, in the hope of being among those so blessed.

J.A.DeF.

A CONFESSION. Dr. J. Thomas (March 3, 1847)

--- Under the influence of human tradition and example, we have invited persons to come forward on the spur of the moment, and be baptized for remission of sins; when from the nature of things, it was impossible, that they could have been enlightened; had we been properly instructed, we should not now have to make this confession and abjuration of our mistakes. Better late, however, than not at all. --- We do not remember, that we ever taught the existence of an immortal soul in corruptible man, and the translation thereof to heaven, or hell, at the instant of death; if we have, so much the worse: no man can hold this dogma, and acceptably believe the Gospel of the kingdom of God and his Christ; we abjure it as "a damnable heresy." ---

There may be other things which have escaped our recollection; whatever they be, let them all go into eternal oblivion; we count them all but dross, and abjure them all, that we may enter upon a new era as the freedman of Christ and his truth.

We erred in holding in abeyance the most trivial inference from the truth on any pretence whatever; we abjure all errors of this kind, and that this opportunity of declaring that no compromise with men or principles can hereafter be extracted from the editor.

We admit that we have not accepted the slanders and reproaches bestowed upon us, with the gratitude the word inculcates. Born and educated in a country where character is more precious than gold, we have, in time past, felt like Ephraim unaccustomed to the yoke, when suffering under the galling imputations of reckless assailants.

Experience, however, has taught us that in this country, slander is the people's broadsword with which they seek to slay the reputation of all, whom aim to serve them otherwise than in subservience to their passions, in the things of time or eternity. But blessed be our foes in their basket and store. We thank them for their persecution and opposition with which they have encountered us. But for these, we should have been, perhaps, like them, "in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity". Their course has compelled us to study more diligently than we might have done, the Holy Scriptures, that we might be better able to give an answer to every one that should ask a reason of the Hope that is in us. Had they let us alone, it is probable, we should have been in good repute indeed with them and their leaders; and might even have been teaching the

same fables: which, however, would have deprived us of the pleasure of confessing our errors and mistakes, and of thus publicly renouncing and bidding them adieu.

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers - - - .” (2 Timothy 4:3).

How thought provoking was the report of a recent religious gathering at a large Arena in the city of London. An American preacher had arrived to expound the Pentecostal “prosperity gospel”. The call to all those people who had assembled was “Come out and be blessed”. Those attending were given an “offering envelope” on entering, also making known to Pentecostal stewards their names and addresses.

When the Minister began to speak one of his first utterances was to ask if anyone HAD NOT received an envelope! Gospel songs then began to be played, and the religious leader cried out “Satan is bound up, Jesus is Lord”, and the multitude responded “Amen”. Following this their Pastor explained that the secret to financial reward was faith. They had to “believe to receive”. That it was lack of faith that was the only inhibitor of material reward. His philosophy was expounded as follows:-

“I do not know your debt situation but believe you are out of debt. You are out of debt right now.”

“I believe I receive MY debts paid off right now. I believe I receive health in my marriage right now. That is the spirit of faith. The spirit of faith believes it receives right now.”

Then came the exhortation to those who had received the “offering envelopes” that they could not lose by giving. They were not giving their money away to the Church. “The farmer when he sows seed does not give his seed away. He sows into the ground expecting a harvest from the ground. When you sow into the ministry you do not give your money away. You sow your money into the church. You expect a harvest to come out of the ground. You have to start thinking like farmers NOT LIKE RELIGIOUS FOLK.”

The Pastor then directed the congregation to Proverbs chapter 3:9:-

“Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the

firstfruits of all thine increase:

So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

He translated the reference to substance as meaning "capital". "It was now", he said, "opportunity for prosperity time." The masses before him screamed out in reply. He then went on to say, "This is what I want you to understand about your financial picture. Trust me." The congregation began singing heartily, and waving their hands, to the strains of a song called PROSPERITY.

The people these days will ENDURE this sort of perversion and the myth of a "Personal Satan bound up", but are far from an inclination for TRUTH.

How telling, in this context, is the following scriptural warning:-

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings.

Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, SUPPOSING THAT GAIN IS GODLINESS: from such withdraw thyself." (1 Timothy 6:3-5).

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

Response to the Jamestown, New York advertising for our prophecies booklet brought little response, indicative of the general lack of the interest in Bible prophecy.

The annual summer outing is scheduled for 18th August God willing. We look forward to enjoying one anothers companionship amidst the wonders of His creation.

J.A.DeF.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.00 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 2.00 p.m.

At the time of writing, electioneering is in full swing in this land. The public attention in this is particularly diverted to the processes of government. There is however little or no concern for something far more important, as described in the following:-

“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure.” (2 Peter 1:10).