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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

“LET THERE BE LIGHT”

Today we have listened to Paul as he addressed his brethren in Corinth. Paul had spent one and one-half years in Corinth, teaching and preaching the gospel (Acts 18:11). That teaching bore fruit, as God had revealed to Paul as he taught in Corinth:

“... Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace,
For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee:
for I have much people in this city.” Acts 18:9-10.

This was part of Paul’s determination to “spend and be spent” (II Corinthians 12:15) on behalf of those who would respond to the wonders of God’s purpose. His words were to remind those who would listen, of the mercies and grace of God in revealing the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. His love for them moved him to strengthen them in the faith by edifying, sustaining, chastening where needed, and by lifting up when in tribulation or grief.

We read of Paul’s mind as he went about this work in Corinth some six years after he had spent so much time in bringing them to the hope of the gospel:

“For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

II Corinthians 4:5-6.

This was Paul’s spirit as he served those who perceived the light of the knowledge of God. We remember his experience on the way to Damascus as a brilliant light from heaven shined upon him, and he responded in awe and fear:

“... he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? ...” Acts 9:6.

The Almighty directed that he go into the city, to be shown what was required. Ananias, directed by God, spoke to Paul:

“... Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way ... hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” Acts 9:17.

Paul was baptized after his sight was miraculously restored, and immediately he went into Damascus and:

“... preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.” Acts 9:20.

This was the result of God's revealing to Ananias His purpose with Paul:

“... he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.”

Acts 9:15.

Paul did reflect that light which so drastically changed his life, as he taught of “the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” This was the light that God ordained from the beginning, as we read His first recorded words:

“... Let there be light: and there was light.

And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.”

Genesis 1:3-4.

Light gives life; without light there is no life. How wise God is! Before He began His creation, He provided the essential light! Spiritually speaking, light — the light of His Word, His Truth — is the means of eternal life for those who, like Paul, seek to be children of light, His sons and daughters. Jesus helps us as He spoke to the Pharisees, saying:

“... I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

John 8:12.

This is the light that shined upon Saul as he journeyed to Damascus. The word “shined” (Acts 9:3) has the thought of flashing all around, enveloped in light. Surely it was no ordinary light, but the power of God's Spirit seeking out one for His purpose, His work. Paul in fear asked: “... Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? ...” He submitted the rest of his life as a true servant of God. The light shined into his heart and, like a laser, cut off the flesh and its darkness, making Paul one of God's “children of light.”

Stephen also was strengthened to face persecution because he was one of His children of light. In the midst of tribulation:

“... he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.”

Acts 7:55.

This vision of the light, the glory of God, sustained Stephen as he was stoned, and allowed him to say:

“... Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

Acts 7:59.

He had hope — the hope of eternal life — with the flesh and its weaknesses gone, to become a son of God for eternity when Jesus returns to judge those responsible, because of the revealing of God's light and submission to it. It was not without purpose that a young

man witnessed Stephen's strength and spirit, even unto death:

"... the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul." Acts 7:58.

Was this one of the "pricks" which Saul kicked against (Acts 9:5)? "Kick" gives the thought of refusing to obey authority. It took the miraculous light flashing to and fro, before Saul could say: "... Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6).

Jesus also was sustained in His struggle to glorify God by putting away all temptation. He was transfigured before Peter, James and John on a high mountain:

"... and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." Matthew 17:2.

His face shined as He was carried in vision to the ultimate purpose of God — the Messiah, the Victor, the eternal Son of God, a true child of light with no darkness at all. He looked forward to that hope, sustained by God's hand, until he could sit at God's right hand, as the unblemished Lamb of God. We are shown this purpose accomplished, when the Revelation was revealed to John on Patmos:

"He saw a mighty Angel (Jesus) come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire."

Revelation 10:1.

The light of God shined forth as the sun, emanating from Jesus and through the cloud to form a rainbow — the token of a covenant God made with Noah. Noah will be in that cloud of witnesses, which clothed Jesus, and will rejoice at the rainbow — the covenant of God with His children of light.

Brethren and Sisters, do we let that light work as a laser in ourselves? Do we allow it to search out any darkness of the flesh and cut out all thinking that belongs to the flesh, striving to be circumcised, as Paul reminds us:

"But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Romans 2:29.

Do we figuratively set our face to go up to Jerusalem, trusting, relying on our Father, putting our life in His hands in whatever circumstances that He in wisdom and mercy places upon us? Are we not constantly reminded that we are flesh, mortal, subject to death at any time? Yet, do we not have a hope of eternal life as we struggle to be children of light, striving to follow the example of Jesus Christ, the son of man, who became perfectly the Son of God, as He cried out

on the cross. "It is finished"? His life of struggling, agonizing to be the unblemished Lamb of God ended as He died, the Victor over His flesh nature.

How merciful and gracious is our God to allow us to know that hope! Indeed, God is "the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort" (II Corinthians 1:3).

Paul reminded and warned as he addressed his brethren in Corinth:

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

II Corinthians 4:7.

"Earthen vessels" are made of clay, conditioned by the potter to be easily shaped by his hands, as he makes the clay conform into a vessel fit for his use, after it is baked in an oven to strengthen it. Earthen (clay) vessels are very useful, but must be handled carefully lest they break and are discarded, no longer fit for use. We realize how appropriate is this simile, for we are weak vessels, subject to conditions which can cause us to shatter. Indeed, we are reminded that the power to spiritually survive is not ours, but is in the hands of our Maker. Are we, Brethren and Sisters, striving to be chosen vessels, as was Paul, struggling to be meet for His use? We have the hope of being golden vessels — "bowls before the altar" — when Jesus returns to gather His Bride for eternity.

David was one who was a vessel fit for his Master's use, and He expressed his mind in Psalm 50 — entitled, "A Psalm of Asaph" (the Gatherer).

"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

Our God shall come . . .

He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah."

Psalm 50:2-6.

Let us value this, looking to the end, as the word "Selah" means: God's purpose is sure from the first day of creation until the coming of Jesus Christ to gather His saints for eternity, as kings and priests, joined to those who have gone before as children of light. We long for that day to soon come as He has ordained, when we may be found meet to be golden "bowls before the altar" with all sadness, weeping, tribulation and trial put away.

J.A.DeF.

JOSHUA'S LEGACY

In our recent readings we have been permitted a glimpse into Joshua's mind and heart as he neared the end of his life and made plans to leave the work entrusted to his care as a leader over the children of Israel, to others:

"And it came to pass a long time after that the LORD had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua waxed old and stricken in age.

And Joshua called for all Israel, and for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and stricken in age.

And ye have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the LORD your God is he that hath fought for you." Joshua 23:1-3.

Joshua then went on to speak of the experiences they had witnessed upon coming into their promised inheritance under God's care:

"Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea westward.

And the LORD your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the LORD your God hath promised unto you." Joshua 23:4-5.

There were other lands yet to be conquered, and as he neared the end of his own life, his desire was to encourage those remaining to carry on this work:

"Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left; But cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day.

For the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and strong; but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day." Joshua 23:6, 8-9.

This instruction, was similar to the encouragement he received from Moses at the time of his death, as he turned the responsibility of leadership over to Joshua:

"And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of a good courage: for thou

must go with this people unto the land which the LORD hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it.

And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.” Deuteronomy 31:7-8.

How well Joshua took heed to Moses’ words, and now he desired to impart this same encouragement to Israel by instructing their leaders to follow after God’s laws, cleaving to Him alone by remaining separate from the surrounding nations who knew not God. If they were not diligent to do this, he warned:

“Else if ye do in any wise go back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you:

Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you.”

Joshua 23:12-13.

This word “to cleave” comes from a prime root meaning “to cling or adhere”, giving the thought of joining. How true that when Israel was close to God, He helped them through adversity and trial, giving them power over their enemies. However, when they turned their backs on His covenant, He left them to their own devices and to the mercy of their persecutors.

Joshua was a faithful influence upon Israel, for his steadfast example and words of encouragement remained strong in the minds of those elders who overtook the work after his death.

“And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of NUN, the servant of the LORD died, being an hundred and ten years old.

And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathserah, which is in mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash.

And Israel served the LORD all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel.” Joshua 24:29-31.

David too understood the necessity of cleaving unto the Lord as he wrote these words while in the wilderness, fleeing from his

enemies:

“O GOD, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;” Psalm 63:1.

He spoke of needing God’s help as a thirsty man craves a refreshing drink of water — the only comfort that would ease his suffering.

“My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.” Psalm 63:8.

To “follow hard” is to cleave closely to God, and David knew that only as he remained close to the Almighty was there hope. He also speaks in faith of the promise God had extended of a Messiah to sit upon His right hand. David believed in the One to sit at His Father’s right hand who would descend from the house of David.

Joshua and David both left faithful legacies as men who kept their eyes upon the Almighty, endeavoring to walk in His ways and seeking His help through the many adversities they experienced. Both Joshua and David were known for their stalwart courage and strength which came from a reliance upon the God of Israel.

There is great help seen in these words left for our admonition. To all those who seek to love and cleave unto Him, regardless of the obstacles placed in their path, He has promised a covering of grace through His Son who now sits on the right hand of the Father as our Mediator and the Cornerstone of our hope of life.

M.C.S.

JUDGE NOT (R.R. 1868)

We are not to be indifferent about the truth. Some people say that because Christ says “Judge not”, therefore, we are not to trouble ourselves as to who is in the truth and who is not. This is a misapplication of his word. The position of a man in relation to the truth, is just what we are to judge. We are not to judge who of those having the truth are really God’s, but we are to try the spirits whether they be of God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. We are “to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints.” We are not, for one moment, to give way to those who would corrupt the truth. Here we are to withstand delinquency. This is quite another thing. The principles laid down in the apostolic

exhortation apply only to those who receive the faith, who believe the truth, and reject the fables. With those who reject the truth, we are not in association; but as to those who receive it, we are not to say that such and such are not of God's; this is the place for our charity. Where there is a profession of obedience, and an external consistency, we are to throw a broad mantle overall. Think the best and act the kindest; take no notice of all weaknesses. You see — forget things. This is our duty. It is a misfortune to our own selves if we have that feverish tendency to be critical which some exhibit — that unhappy nervousness about other people's failings. It destroys happiness. No man can grow spiritually who is in a continual state of acrimony. He cannot evince that kindness of deportment which ought to characterise the intercourse of brethren and sisters, certainly not to the individual against whom the bitterness is harboured. The latter sees the coldness and is repelled, and made cold in return. He mentions it to another; the other is involved in the heat, and thus the evil spreads. If there is a grievous departure from the way of truth, we must speak to a brother about it, but let us speak about it privately. Don't report the matter. If there is no departure from the way of truth, but merely the exhibition of constitutional weakness, be patient; take no notice. Instead of this, you go to another, and say "Why So and So has been behaving shamefully, hasn't he?" "How", says the other, "What is it?" and then you let off your story, which, if ever so trifling in its origin in your mind, makes a deep impression upon the mind of the other — an impression, it may be, not warranted by the original facts, but inevitably created by your representation. If you feel a thing strongly, you express it strongly, and the other having only your strong expressions to go by, naturally conceives a vivid and overdrawn picture of the matter. The result is that when he is thrown in contact with the man against whom you have been speaking, there is a coldness. Others hear of it and catch the cold, and there is a general brewing of bad feeling, all through next to nothing at all. It is as Solomon says, "A little matter kindleth a great fire." "A tale-bearer separateth friends." Talebearers ought to be kept down. They ought not to be listened to. It is their duty to go to the person themselves. This is Christ's rule, and there are a lot of little rules, which if they were observed, would cause a much better state of things to prevail. If brethren are trying to do their best, encourage them. Do not repeat things. Let us do our duty.

Footnote

If the above advice had been allowed to prevail in the Ecclesia,

the special ecclesial meeting arranged by the leader at Nottingham in 1954 would not have taken place. Nor would it have been supported by the Nottingham members. At that time, private, questioning letters, to that leader from a member of another ecclesia were critically made public, but at the same time the leader refused to discuss in private, and personally, the matters raised. The correspondent was not even told her letters would be read out to the assembly.

Compare the mind of R. Roberts with the man who broke up the Ecclesia in 1954.

THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME

(Exodus 20:3)

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the Church of England, is about to retire. He is a metropolitan bishop having jurisdiction over the bishops of the Church. It has been an important position for he has led the national church. This church broke with Rome in 1534 when King Henry VIII assumed the title of head of the church. However its hierarchy and ceremony are still rooted in Catholic tradition. Its nominal membership is estimated to be over 25 million. Its senior bishops (designated lords spiritual) sit in Parliament in the House of Lords, and these are led by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Already a successor Archbishop has been chosen, he currently is the Archbishop of Wales, and is due to take over from the retiring Archbishop next month. But what is so amazing about this appointment is that the next incumbent is a Druid! And as occasion requires he stands in a stone circle surrounded by fellow druids chanting prayers. The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster who is leader of the Roman Catholics in England and Wales does not however seem to be bothered, for he has commended the new appointment in the words, "He will prove to be a force for great good in this country."

The question may be asked, "What were Druids?" Or, "What today are Druids?" It is an ancient order of Celtic priests with great influence in Gaul (France), Wales and Ireland. They were revered, and through their influence separate Celtic groups were united together in the past. Their religion concerned the "god and goddess

of the land", the gods of nature. The oak and mistletoe were sacred to them.

A member of the church, now long since deceased, published a book 86 years ago in which he made the following comments about the Druids:-

"The worship of Bel and Astarte was very early introduced into Britain, along with the Druids, 'the priests of the groves'. Some have imagined that the Druidical worship was first introduced by the Phenicians, who, centuries before the Christian era, traded to the tin-mines of Cornwall. But the unequivocal traces of that worship are found in regions of the British islands where the Phenicians never penetrated, and it has everywhere left indelible marks of the strong hold which it must have had on the early British mind. From Bel, the 1st of May is still called Beltane in the Almanac; and we have customs still lingering at this day among us, which prove how exactly the worship of Bel or Moloch (for both titles belonged to the same god) has been observed even in the northern parts of this island. The late Lady Baird of --- Perthshire --- thoroughly versed in British antiquities (said) that every year at Beltane (or the 1st of May), a number of men and women (assembled) at an ancient Druidical circle of stones on her property near Crieff. They light a fire in the centre, each person puts a bit of oat-cake in a shepherd's bonnet; they all sit down and draw blindfold a piece from the bonnet. One piece has been previously blackened, and whoever gets that piece has to jump through the fire in the centre of the circle, and pay a forfeit. This is, in fact, a part of the ancient worship of Baal, and the person on whom the lot fell was previously burnt as a sacrifice. Now, the passing through the fire represents that, and the payment of the forfeit redeems the victim."

If the writer of the above was alive today, and was told that a new Archbishop was about to take over, who supports the Druids, we need not make a guess as what he would have to say. But there are disturbed individuals even now who have written to the press and the following are extracts of what they have had to say:-

"- - - the Archbishop of Wales, who through becoming a Druid, has shown that he is unfit for that calling. To chant a prayer to the 'god or goddess of the land' clearly goes against God's word that 'you shall have no other gods

before me', and also runs counter to the Church of England's sixth article that 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation'."

(Another comment)

"I was horrified to read your article about embracing pagan roots. The Bible is very clear about what is right and wrong, and this clearly is wrong. It will be very sad for the nation if this man is appointed Archbishop."

(Again)

"Why does a man who has access to know and worship the Creator of all, need to join a group who worship the things He created? Its nothing new, of course, for the religious establishment to fall into "Baal and Asherah" worship. The Old Testament is full of examples, and just look what happened to them."

(Also)

"The next Archbishop of Canterbury should be a Christian. He should not be a Druid or of any other religion."

The protesters however are in a minority. Even the "form of godliness" has declined. The world has lost its respect for the Bible, God's Holy Word which has been derogatorily referred to as a book of mythology. The human mind being what it is, it is only a small step from placing the Bible among the books that are in the realms of superstition, to adopting ancient falsities, condemned by God's Word, and associating them with a pseudo purported serving of the requirements of God's Truth.

A BIBLE CLASS

"WISE AS SERPENTS, HARMLESS AS DOVES"

Matthew 10:16

These words are part of Jesus' instructions as he sent out the twelve apostles to preach the gospel to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel." This being their first preaching experience, Jesus gave them careful guidance. First of all, He gave them:

"... power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease."

Matthew 10:1.

No doubt, these apostles would be concerned about their first going

forth. Jesus, recognizing this, provided help for them:

“And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.”

Matthew 10:7-8.

The twelve had been given the power of God’s Holy Spirit to do miracles, as evidence that they were messengers of God. As such, they were to use the God-given power in their proclaiming the gospel — the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.

Jesus also instructed concerning their practical needs as they went about this work. They were not to worry about these things, as Jesus spoke:

“... for the workman is worthy of his meat.”

Matthew 10:10.

Being God’s workmen, this same power would provide for all their needs. Jesus also warned of dangers that they would encounter in this work:

“Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.”

Matthew 10:16.

Jesus Himself experienced the enmity that exists between those who seek to honor God, and those who are governed by the creature rather than by the Creator. This enmity began in the garden of Eden as Adam and Eve became dying creatures, when they ate of the forbidden tree in the midst of the garden; God had decreed that they would surely die if they did so. Eve was seduced by the serpent’s lie:

“... Ye shall not surely die.”

Genesis 3:4.

God said to the serpent that hereafter:

“... I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

Genesis 3:15.

Ever since, there has been hatred between those who strive to serve God (the seed of the woman) and those who are ruled by their own desires (the seed of the serpent). Jesus, as the seed of the woman, warned His apostles of the serpent’s seed who would be like wolves, ready to devour them as the seed of the woman.

What was to be their defense against such danger? Jesus’ words help:

“... be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as

doves.”

Matthew 10:16.

And He went on to warn:

“But beware of men (seed of the serpent): for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues.” Verse 17.

Jesus then reminded them of the Power that had been bestowed upon them:

“But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.” Matthew 10:19-20.

The seed of the serpent is wise — scheming in its evil way — in the warfare against those who are the seed of the woman. In opposing this evil, the apostles were imbued with the Spirit of God, directing them how they were to speak: with the wisdom of God’s Spirit — far exceeding any wisdom known to man — enabling them to overcome the wolves intent upon devouring the sheep.

As they went about their work, they experienced the help, the protection, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As they did miracles — healing lepers, raising the dead — they would rejoice in the work. It would be done faithfully: not reviling when reviled, not seeking vengeance for violence, and not acting in the letter of the law — an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. In so doing, they would be “harmless as doves,” depending upon God for their help. Also, they were to bring peace in their preaching:

“... when ye come into an house, salute (embrace) it.

And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.”

Matthew 10:12-13.

To those who embraced their message, the apostles would bring the peace found in the word of God. They were indeed “harmless as doves” — a universal symbol of peace. One of the dictionary definitions for “dove” is a person regarded as gentle, innocent or beloved — the opposite of a “hawk” which is a raptor, a predatory bird, devouring peaceful prey, such as a dove.

How greatly lifted up and encouraged these twelve must have felt in their godly work! Truly they had freely received, and they freely gave, in preaching the gospel to those who would receive it.

When they returned from this work:

“... the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus,

and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had not leisure so much as to eat."

Mark 6:30-31.

Jesus welcomed them with open arms and provided a place of rest after their arduous and faithful work.

As we struggle against the wiles of the serpent, engaged in the enmity between his seed and the seed of the woman, can we not be helped, as were the twelve, by Jesus' words:

". . . be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

Matthew 10:16.

J.A.DeF.

THE EARTH ABIDETH FOR EVER

(Ecclesiastes 1:4)

Fears have been recently voiced that the earth may be coming to its end. Astronomers are concerned about what they term as debris in outer space. A particular worry is referred to as Space Rock 2002 NT7. It is a giant asteroid which travels at 28 kilometres per second, and astronomers estimate that it is possible that it could hit the earth at the beginning of February AD 2019. A hit with such an object would have an explosive force of hundreds of atomic bombs and would be catastrophic. A professor at the John Moore's University of Liverpool has expressed a pessimistic fear:-

"Sooner or later we WILL meet an object that is on a collision course. --- And that is as certain as 'Amen' in church."

Of course Asteroid NT7 IS a sinister object. It circles the sun every 837 days and travels in a tilted orbit around Mars and then comes within the Earth's orbit. And men who have relegated the Bible, God's Holy Word, have no longer faith as a result of this rejection, hence their fear. But the testimony of the Most High through the message of His counsel is most assuring for those who have "ears to hear".

"One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.

The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth

to his place where he arose.

The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north: it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again." (Ecclesiastes 1:4-7).

These words speak of the continuity of this beautiful creation. God has made it to abide. It is an assurance to those who have faith. The Bible itself, however, speaks about a great astronomical event. It was at the time when Joshua was leading the nation of Israel from the Wilderness of Sinai into the land of Canaan. It was a very great task, for many nations opposed him, who desired to destroy Israel. As Joshua began to succeed in a very great battle, he cried out for God's help, needing time to establish his initial victory:-

"Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies.

Is not this written in the book of Jasher? (written in the book of truth).

So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel." (Joshua 10:12-14).

Some astronomers would say such an astronomical event is impossible, it would end the earth as we know it. Well, the earth did not end, neither did it change, but God's word assures us that it did happen. To say disaster might come to this good earth from some hurtling missile from outer space, is to reveal an ignorance of God's eternal and beautiful purpose with this earth. God's ultimate plan will not fail for:-

"--- the LORD said, I have pardoned according to thy word: But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD." (Numbers 14:20-21).

"LET NO MAN SEEK HIS OWN"

I Corinthians 10:24

From the context of our verse under consideration we see that Paul was writing to his brethren at Corinth — those who had embraced the gospel of Christ. His letter was a reminder of the particulars of their walk in faith, stressing what God required of them.

Paul begins this tenth chapter using the example of those in Israel who had lost their hope of life because of their unbelief and lack of fear of God. They instead complained and murmured while in travelling through the wilderness, because of the lack of food and water. Therefore, Paul says the need is to fear God and look not at our own needs but look to the needs of others:

"But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were over-thrown in the wilderness.

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." I Corinthians 10:5-6, 10-11.

The spirit of our verse under consideration looks at how we can serve God and be a follower of Christ remembering that He said:

"The first of all the commandments is, HEAR, O ISRAEL; THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD:

AND THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIND, AND WITH ALL THY STRENGTH: this is the first commandment.

And the second is like, namely this, THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF. There is none other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:29-31.

Throughout his ministry Paul endeavoured to put himself in the place of others so as to better convey to them the gospel of Christ as he said:

"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved."

I Corinthians 10:33.

In this regard he wrote to his brethren at Corinth that they too may learn the valuable lesson from our consideration:

“Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth.”

I Corinthians 10:24.

As the Lord Jesus prepared His disciples to carry on His work after His death, he also taught of the need to reflect the love He had bestowed upon them:

“This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

John 15:12-14.

In another letter to his Roman brethren, Paul said in like manner:

“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

For even Christ pleased not himself, but, as it is written,
THE REPROACHES OF THEM THAT REPROACHED
THEE FELL ON ME.”

Romans 15:1-3.

James was another who understood the necessity of looking not to one’s own needs, but to the needs of those in like fellowship, and referred to this underlying principle as, “the royal law” — given by the King to His followers that they may walk in His precepts and honor Him:

“Hearken my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture,
THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF, ye do well.”

James 2:5-8.

To not seek one’s own but another’s wealth is to be selfless. Just as Christ looked not to His own comforts or practical needs, but rather spent His life in the preaching of God’s word in order to offer His friends a hope from death. He spent endless hours with His disciples that they might grow in knowledge and understanding in order to carry on His work after His departure — all done in love for them and for those who may hear that word.

We live in a world caught up with their own "rights", whether they be civil, religious or political — most seek their own, not another's good. It is easy to be caught up in this mindset if we are not diligent to follow Christ's word and example. To seek one's own is a manifestation of a self-centered fleshly dominated nature, and can be no part of the character of those who seek a place in His Kingdom to be established at Christ's return. With this in mind, Brethren and Sisters, let us cast aside our own daily personal worries and cares, remembering to look to the needs of those of like precious faith.

M.C.S.

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

"And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. - - -

For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

(Matthew 24:22-23 & 27).

The threat to the peoples of this earth is not from outer space, it is from man himself! Short term gain is the pre-eminent consideration of mankind.

The World Wildlife Fund estimates that the over exploitation of the commodities of this planet takes place mainly in the West. Just over one acre of land supports a person in Burundi, Africa, whereas it takes up to 30 acres per person to provide for the peoples of the West; that is Europe and America, whose way of life demands far more to satisfy what they require. As a result there is considerable depletion of natural provision in many essential areas of the world's harvest.

The startling statement has been made that:-

"One third of the natural world has been destroyed by humans."

A spokesperson at the World Conservation Monitoring Centre in Cambridge recently voiced the worry, "Things are getting worse faster than ever before. Never has one single species had such an overwhelming influence. We are entering uncharted territory."

The following figures give an example of what is happening.

The forests of the Earth have shrunk by twelve per-cent in the last thirty two years.

Ah, yes! The days have long gone when a wood cutter took an axe to chop down a tree. Even the days when two men took a large saw to cut down a tree to provide material for an enterprise are in the past. Now it is power tools, that rip down one tree after another in a very short space of time. So the world's forests have begun to be decimated.

Then there is the new method of fishing. The modern net does not discriminate. Small fish as well as large are gathered up, with many of the small ones thrown away as not suitable for the commercial market. The following gives an instance of what results from over-fishing:-

"Fish stocks in the Atlantic have fallen from 264,000 tonnes to 60,000 tonnes of cod since 1970."

What men are doing is also affecting fresh water eco systems in rivers and lakes. There has been a fifty per cent depletion of life in this area since 1970.

Wild creatures are also greatly affected. Elephants are being considerably reduced, because of the ivory trade (though this is supposed to be illegal).

The tiger population is down by ninety five per cent (Tiger skin rugs have been very much sought for), according to a recent report. Skins of other wild creatures are being turned into all kinds of goods, and because of modern technology what would have been a difficult quarry to take, is no longer a problem.

Will men begin to curb this exploitation to the necessary degree? Jesus tells us that left to themselves men will not restrain themselves. This threat to life and provision is in addition to the horrific development of weapons of mass destruction, which also threaten mankind.

But on record is the promise of Jesus that He is coming! In the purpose of God He is to save those, who in faith, belong to Him. He will first of all come to the East, in the land of His birth. The world will then begin to be enlightened and saved from its ignorance. Christ's beneficent influence will spread, dispelling the darkness. The light of His Truth will shine out like a sunshine, moving on to the peoples of the West, to the saving of this good earth.

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

Continued turmoil and violence in Israel frustrates any plans for peace. Truly Jerusalem is "a burdensome stone for all people" — as it has been through many centuries. The only enduring solution awaits the coming of Jesus Christ to establish it as the center of His kingdom, from which the law will go forth to all nations.

The revelation of corruption and deceit in the financial operation of large corporations in the United States has caused much economic turmoil and lack of confidence on the part of the people. Many have suffered severe economic loss, especially in relation to retirement incomes. Again it is another sign of the coming of the Lord Jesus to reign in righteousness and stability.

J.A.DeF.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.00 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 2.00 p.m.

We are continuing our circularising in divers place. To the general public in Wales and Ireland, but also to appropriate addresses offering our History of the Truth, and to other addresses, our magazine.