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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

**"Take heed that ye be not deceived"**

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**AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD**  
**"BEHOLD, I WILL HEAL THEE"**

Our minds have been directed to Hezekiah, king of Judah and Jerusalem, in our recent readings. He was sorely troubled, as Sennacherib, king of Assyria, threatened Jerusalem with a mighty army. At the same time, the prophet Isaiah came to Hezekiah with a message, saying:

"... Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live." II Kings 20:1.

He must have felt that this was the end for himself, and for Jerusalem as well. What was Hezekiah's reaction to such a troublesome situation?

"Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying,  
I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore."

II Kings 20:2-3.

In faith, the king put his trust in the Almighty, humbly seeking His help in this sore trial. He turned his face to the wall, lest he be distracted by his surroundings, and besought the LORD that he would take into account his faithful work and "perfect" heart. In addition, he wept sore. Here was trust in God's mercy and grace, as he humbly put himself in God's hands. It is striking that the word "beseech" used here is made up of two Hebrew words: (1) I pray, or beseech, and (2) love, affection. Hezekiah in extreme distress called upon God's love, that He might grant His mercy, recognizing that only the Almighty could save him and Jerusalem. God immediately responded through His prophet:

"... Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears; behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up into the house of the LORD.

And I will add unto thy days fifteen years, and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake . . ."

II Kings 20:5-6.

Previously God had promised Hezekiah:

"... I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake."

II Kings 19:34.

The Almighty heard, and promised to heal and deliver Hezekiah for

His own sake, that His Name might be glorified; and also for David's sake, for David was one who also greatly pleased God. As a consequence, the Almighty promised David that there would be a king, a throne, a house, and a kingdom, which would last forever. This promise will be fulfilled at the coming of His greater Son, Jesus Christ, to bring about His kingdom.

We are shown David's mind which was so pleasing to God, as in faith he besought God:

"Be merciful unto me, O God: for man would swallow me up . . .

What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book? When I cry unto thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me. In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

Thy vows are upon me, O God, I will render praises unto thee.

For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?" Psalm 56:1, 3, 8-9, 11-13.

In love for God, David put his trust in His deliverance, beseeching that He would perceive his need, put his name in the book of life, and acknowledge his tears.

Hezekiah revealed the same love and trust in God's mercy, as he turned his face to the wall, wept sore, and besought God. How he would rejoice, praising and thanking God, as he heard His words: "I will heal thee, . . . I will deliver thee and this city . . ." To "heal" is to mend, and involves a cure, repair, or making whole, as only the Almighty can do. Hezekiah asked for a sign that His healing would come to pass, and was given a choice by Isaiah:

". . . This sign shalt thou have of the LORD . . . shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?"

II Kings 20:9.

Hezekiah replied:

". . . It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.

And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz." II Kings 20:10-11.

God, pleased with Hezekiah's spirit, heard his beseeching, cured his

illness, and caused Sennacherib and his army to leave Jerusalem, without shooting even an arrow into the city:

“Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side.

And many brought gifts unto the LORD to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thenceforth.”

II Chronicles 32:22-23.

Hezekiah prospered, having exceeding many riches:

“... God had given him substance very much,  
... And Hezekiah prospered in all his works.”

II Chronicles 32:29-30.

What blessings were showered upon Hezekiah as he put his trust in God, enjoying many benefits during his added fifteen years of life!

Toward the end of the fifteen added years of prosperity, God tested Hezekiah. Would he still submit to God, would he acknowledge that all he had — his life, his prosperity — was granted by the Almighty? How did God test Hezekiah? The record tells us:

“Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.” II Chronicles 32:31.

When these Babylonian ambassadors came, Hezekiah showed them:

“... all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, not in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not.” II Kings 20:13.

The king boasted of his treasures, forgetting that were it not for God’s mercy in hearing his supplications, Hezekiah would be dead, Jerusalem would be conquered, there would be nothing! When questioned by Isaiah, his reply was:

“... All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them.” II Kings 20:15.

Hezekiah looked upon his riches, his renown, with pride, revealing them to the ambassadors of Babylon, a successor to the Assyrian power. He overlooked that God had given him an extended life and his great prosperity. The record in II Chronicles reveals his mind

behind this failure:

“But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.”

II Chronicles 32:25.

The Hebrew word for “benefit” is also used for “that which is given.” Benefits are not earned, but are given in love, as God gave fifteen added years of life, safety for Jerusalem, and prosperity to Hezekiah and Judah. The king, as he prospered and grew in esteem, failed to acknowledge they were not his doings, but God’s gifts. God “left him” to try him, “. . . that he might know all that was in his heart.” It was revealed that “his heart was lifted up” in pride.

At times God does leave His people for a moment — to test them. David was one so tested as he cried out in tribulation and affliction:

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken (left) me? why art thou so far from helping me?” Psalm 22:1.

David was cast down as it appeared that God had forsaken him. In his need, he questioned:

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.” Psalm 42:5.

“Hope” — or as the word means trust in God — is the antidote to despair; for with a true trust in God, there is no lasting despair. He is there, even though He appears to have forsaken, in His desire to test each heart. David was a man after God’s own heart and sustained his trust in Him.

Jesus also cried out in his sixth hour upon the cross:

“. . . My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Mark 15:34.

He was not forsaken, left, but rather, God was testing Him: would He endure, or would His flesh revolt against God’s purpose in Him? He did endure, He did submit, and at the ninth hour said:

“. . . Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the spirit.” Luke 23:46.

His struggle, His agonizing to do His Father’s will, was finished as He gave up His life to His Father in victory over His flesh. He now sits with His Father in the heavens as the mediator, the redeemer, the healer of those who truly hope and trust in the Lord God — the One who said to Hezekiah: “I will heal thee.” This is our hope, Brethren and Sisters, that He will hear our cry — our beseeching — and see

our tears as we approach unto Him through Jesus Christ. Not only in times of trial must we cry out, but in times of prosperity, recognizing that all we have are benefits given of our Father in His mercy and love.

Let us turn our face to the wall, pray unto the Lord, and weep sore — trusting that with such humbleness, submission and trust, God will answer in accordance to His will, in mercy and love. Let us remember God's promise in Malachi:

“... unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.”

Malachi 4:2.

*J.A.DeF.*

### THE CALL

We have recently read in our portions in Acts of Cornelius' call and response to the Truth. Much help is gained through this record to teach of the manner of God's calling, as well as the importance of valuing our own calling as Gentiles.

From the scriptures we learn that Cornelius was a Roman centurion and a Gentile, but he had qualities that set him apart in God's eyes. His knowledge of Israel's God must have come through observation and assimilation while working as a soldier for Rome during the occupation of Judea, for we read that he was:

"A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always."  
Acts 10:2.

Here was a man with no knowledge or training in the Hebrew law who perceived Israel's God to be the one true God. We also remember that as Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt, they came out a "mixed multitude", along with Jacob's descendants came some of other nationalities and race, who recognized the power of the Almighty as supreme and that He was with Israel.

Further in Acts chapter 10 we read of Peter's vision, given him of God to prepare his mind for this new work to begin with the Gentiles, to the end that Peter acknowledged:

"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."  
Acts 10:34-35.

It is recorded that Cornelius feared God and prayed fervently, along with his entire household. He sought God's blessing, giving Him reverence and honor through his good deeds and God in His mercy, heard and directed him to the source of His One Body for help and instruction from Peter. Subsequently, many others who came to the Truth, were led by God to His ministers — aptly named by Jesus as the "fishers of men".

Paul regarded his work in this same light as is recorded in his letter to the Corinthians:

"Now then we are **ambassadors for Christ**, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."  
II Corinthians 5:20.

God knows the heart, and those who seek to serve him will be led to His Body, where they can receive help and instruction in the good news of the Kingdom of God and His Son Jesus Christ just as Cornelius was directed to Peter and Paul to Ananias. Those at

Thessalonica received the word in a similar manner as we learn from Paul's writing:

"As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,  
That ye would walk worthy of God, **who hath called you**  
unto his kingdom and glory.

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."  
I Thessalonians 2:11-13.

Going back to the time of David, he also spoke in the Psalms to those called to the Truth through an appreciation of God's handiwork in the creation:

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard."  
Psalm 19:1-3.

He is speaking of God's creation that displays the truth of His word and the constancy of the message of a hope of life after death, as surely as spring follows winter and dawn follows after the night. Just as the surety of resurrection is proclaimed in the planting of any seed into the ground that germinates to become, when properly nurtured, a full grown plant containing hundreds of seeds for future use.

There was also a calling by Christ to those destined to be His ministers and apostles as Paul reminds when writing to those in Rome:

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, **called to be an apostle**, separated unto the gospel of God.

Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints:  
Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."  
Romans 1:1, 6-7.

Paul speaks of himself "called to be an apostle" by the Lord Jesus in vision on the road to Damascus. Here was one who by the outer appearance was a zealous persecutor of the church of Christ and its followers, yet the Lord Jesus knew his heart and knew that once shown the error of his walk, would use that same zeal to the ministry

of His gospel.

The Lord Jesus Himself taught during His ministry of the calling to His Body, likening Himself to the door of the sheepfold:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.” John 10:7-9.

He is the door or entrance into the Kingdom of God. Those who desire to enter into His house must do so through instruction, belief and consequently baptism and fellowship through His name alone.

Paul in writing to the brethren at Ephesus speaks of their calling saying:

“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us into the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”

Ephesians 1:4-5, 9-11.

He was reminding those at Ephesus who had received the Truth, to value this great gift offered through the sacrifice of Christ. They who were once Gentiles unlearned in the purpose of God:

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us.

Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together

with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)" Ephesians 2:1-5. These Ephesians as Gentiles, were in the same position as Cornelius — all outside the hope of Israel. However, through God's great mercy they were allowed this same gift of hope and life — the same which has been offered through the ages to any who earnestly seek to serve Him.

This same call goes out today, giving opportunity for any to make a choice to be joined with Him and His Son in the hope of life. This calling is not always by dramatic circumstances as Cornelius or Paul knew, but more often in quiet unassuming ways through an association with those who are His ministers today.

To be called to that understanding is a great privilege Brethren and Sisters, especially as we are Gentiles born outside of the hope given natural Israel. Yet, God in His great mercy has opened the door as seen in Christ, that we might enter into His Rest. How blessed are those that hear His call and respond in faith and can look forward to living in peace in the Kingdom age, if found worthy, serving him eternally:

**"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful."**

Revelation 17:14.

M.C.S.

### THE GREATNESS OF GOD

A European consortium is now preparing the assembly of a telescope with a mirror 100 metres wide. It will be described as the "Extremely Large Telescope", costing 700 million pounds. There is already what is described as the "Very Large telescope", but this is not sufficient for what is projected. The report concerning this new ambition is as follows:-

"When completed in ten years time it will capture images of the universe in unprecedented detail, giving scientists their first shot of finding and studying distant planets as small as the Earth. These are the most likely sites for extraterrestrial life, but are too faint to be identified by present technology. - - - We should be able not only to see Earth-like planets around nearby stars, but to say look, here it is and its green."

The large telescope that is at present being used has the equivalent of a 200 metre mirror, but comprises four large units, so it is not a single mirror. The new project is planned to have one single mirror made up of thousands of hexagonal glass tiles, using more glass than has ever been used before. It will be ten times wider than the Twin Keck telescopes in Hawaii.

The comment that the scientists are going to look for a planet "that is green" in the far reaches of space, is a significant observation. The thinking behind this is bound up with the theory of evolution. The uniqueness of the Earth is not perceived. This uniqueness witnesses to God and His greatness. Life on this Earth has come about by special design; there has been nothing haphazard in its development. What men do not realise is that their thoughts cannot compare with how the Eternal thinks. Yes, the earth in comparison to the vastness of heaven, is a kind of microcosm, but that is according to human thinking; it is not how God views His creation. From His greatness God looks down on His good earth. For example note the following testimony from His word of Truth:-

"Tomorrow about this time I will send thee a man out of the land of Benjamin, and thou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, that he may save my people out of the hand of the Philistines: for I have looked upon my people, because their cry is come unto me." (I Samuel 9:16).

No doubt this is too simple for some. God's involvement in a direct sense would not be accepted as a fact. But still the evidence is (to those who would face the facts of history) that God at the time of the reference directly intervened and changed the course of events, to

the saving of the nation of Israel, with whom God had directly communicated in the giving of His Law. God "looked down" upon Israel's need. He was concerned, revealing how near He is to the Earth. But men cannot comprehend "this nearness"; and especially when they reject the witness of the Word of God, and describe life as an evolvment. This is the thinking that prompts men to plan the large project to look for other "green planets".

Doubters often voice a question, that if there is a God, why does He allow the terrible famines experienced in various parts of the Earth? The true fact is that there should not be starvation, for the Earth is abundant in its provision. More than enough food is available for all, but men are dilatory in sharing this provision. When people starve to death it is really man who is at fault. Food is a direct blessing of God, and it is specially for the life forms of this Earth. The evidence from the solar system, is that there is no food up there. Food is confined to the earth. This should make men think. Why has it only "evolved" for the earth? God's word reveals the Truth. When God formed life, He also made provision for it at the same time. The wonder of this beautiful design is seen even in the tiniest flower growing in the remotest of barren places, as well as in the fields of food provision.

But there is indeed a "heaven" in a particular sense, and it won't be found or viewed by looking through great telescopes. This is the heaven to which Christ ascended. It is beyond man's visualising what it is like. The galaxies, as viewed through large telescopes are as a curtain that man is unable to penetrate. Ideas of a "third dimension" may be ruminated, but that is a theory of man's imagination. Heaven, the abode of the Most High, is sublime and beyond anything men can conceive. But Jesus, before His ascension, recognised it would be very different. At that last supper before His death and resurrection, He declared:-

"But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."  
(Matthew 26:29).

The fruit of the vine is the provision of this good earth, it is unique to it. Furthermore, it will continue as one of the blessings of the coming Kingdom of God for which this earth has been designed. But man does not accept this so he looks for "green planets". Peter knew failure of realisation would get more and more pronounced:-

"--- there shall come in the last days, scoffers --- saying  
--- Where is the promise of his coming? --- all things

continue as they were from the beginning. - - -"

(2 Peter 3:4).

Men fail to perceive the Greatness of God. For the most part the importance of Paul's words and reference do not make the intended impression. This concerns the exaltation of Jesus the Christ, as captain of the faithful; their leader to salvation in the Kingdom of God on this good earth.

"What is man, that thou art mindful of Him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

How true, when the Greatness of God is reflected upon; who has looked down from heaven upon failing humanity; to provide a way to mercy and eternal life for those who recognise and reverence Him.

## GOD'S PURPOSE WITH THE JEWS

(R. Roberts 1864)

God has not yet done with the Jews. They are His nation, though dyed in iniquity, and scattered among the Gentiles in disgrace. "God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew (or knew beforetime)." This is Paul's testimony, (Romans 11:1) which is but a re-echo of the divine declaration placed on record ages before:

"Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered you, YET WILL I NOT MAKE A FULL END OF YOU, but will correct thee in measure." (Jeremiah 30:11). Their prolonged national adversity, therefore, is no token of divine abandonment, but the very reverse, on the principle supplied in Amos chapter 3:2. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth, THEREFORE WILL I PUNISH YOU FOR ALL YOUR INIQUITIES." The national tribulation, rightly interpreted, is a guarantee of the national election, of a pledge of national restitution under the promises made through the prophets. - - -

There be many which look upon the Jews as an abandoned race, finally and for ever dissevered from special divine regard and degraded to the level of the uncovenanted and accursed Gentiles among whom they are dispersed. Many do this from a sincere but perverted conscience, created within them as the result of partial information and indiscriminating contemplation of certain apostolic statements. Ignorant of those future national movements and national

blessings which come within the scope of God's purposes prophetically and apostolically declared, they cannot see but that the abrogation of "the middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile in the matter of INDIVIDUAL SALVATION, involves the divine repudiation of the national relationship which He established in former days between himself and the Jews: and equally unacquainted with the fact that "salvation is of the Jews." (John 4:22) and is to the very end to be developed like a kernel from their midst, they naturally feel the doctrine of Jewish restoration to be a spiritual anomaly which they reject altogether. How ill advised they are. - - -

**Footnote:** Recently a Jewish world census expressed worry that a significant reduction, as compared to previous, in the total of Jewish people, was revealed. However, though when calculated with the numbers of Arab peoples, the Jews are greatly in the minority, they still comprise many millions; far more yet among the nations, than exist in the land of Israel. R. Roberts' comments assuredly underline a confidence, that though all the world turn against them, the Jews will ultimately prevail.

**"- - - THERE IS NO NEW THING UNDER THE SUN."**

(Ecclesiastes 1:9)

The writer was surprised recently to see a photograph of a perfectly formed horse the size of a dog. It belonged to a breed called a Falabella. A pseudo scientific explanation described this creature as "descended from an animal that existed 60 million years ago". A recent history of this breed is as follows:-

In 1845, Patrick Newall, an Irishman living in Argentina, discovered that tribes of Pampas Indians had some unusually small horses. He managed to acquire some and by 1853 had bred down to create a team of his own, all about ten hands high. In 1879 he handed them over to his son-in-law, Juan Falabella, and by 1927 the bloodline was in the hands of Julio Cesar Falabella, who sold the breed internationally.

Now, consider what the evolutionary theory says about the horse.

The dog sized Eocene Palaeotherium evolved into the horses as we now know them. - - -

Eocene is described as the earliest period of the Tertiary era, a period which saw the dawn of the recent or existing forms of life. - - - Palaeontologists doubt if any of the Eocene species are still extant, unless it be of the lowest forms of life. - - - The Tertiary is explained as the third of the great time divisions of eras since the appearance of clearly recognisable life forms on the earth. It is described as the Age of Mammals.

We ask the question, "Why are there still horses, in the perfect shape of a horse, but only the size of a dog, when the evolution theory is that the small horse of long ago evolved into the large animal, as it is known today?"

But then, along has come a very strange occurrence. From Anchorage is the news that a bird the size of a small aircraft has been seen flying over south west Alaska. Several people have seen it on different occasions. A pilot said he saw the bird from a distance of 300 metres, and the people in his plane also saw it. An interesting comment has appeared as follows:-

"A recent surprise was the appearance of a huge, unknown kind of bird. - - - It was seen from several places on the ground, and also by a pilot and his passengers. - - - It looked like a Pterodactyl - - - the pilot said that in 22 years of local flying, he had never seen anything like it.

Pterodactyls are supposed to have been extinct for more than 100,000 years. The evidence from their fossil bones is that they were raptors with razor-sharp teeth, and flew or glided on large leathery wings. A specimen from Texas, excavated in 1975, had a 51ft. wingspan.

Is it possible that these monsters are still with us? Anything of that sort is possible, ever since the reappearance of the coelacanth. This ancient fish was supposed by evolutionists to be the missing link between sea and land creatures. It was also supposed to have died out 70 million years ago.

But in 1938 a living coelacanth was caught off East Africa. Others turned up, and it is now well known to local fishermen. - - - (A) question applies also to the pterodactyl. In recent years sightings of a mysterious great bird have been reported from all over the world."

Well, evolutionists dress up their explanations in much scientific detail and refer to a vast time-scale. But evidences that emerge, which undoubtedly appear to the naked eye, cannot be denied. This provokes one to say that the simple explanation of scripture is far

more satisfactory for the learned and the unlearned, than theories that are constantly being put into question by living creatures.

### A BIBLE CLASS

#### "O MY PEOPLE, I WILL OPEN YOUR GRAVES"

Ezekiel 37:12

The Almighty spoke these words through His prophet Ezekiel, who was among the captives in Babylon, after Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. He spoke in a vision to encourage those captives, to remind them of His promises to their fathers regarding His people, and the city where He would place His name. These promises could seem improbable for those living in captivity.

In this vision, the hand of the Lord was upon Ezekiel:

"... and (He) carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones.

And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry." Ezekiel 37:1-2.

As Ezekiel looked upon this valley filled with dry or withered bones, the Almighty asked:

"... **Son of man, can these bones live?"** Ezekiel 37:3.

The prophet relied upon God for an answer, as he in faith said:

"... O Lord GOD, thou knowest." Verse 3.

Ezekiel knew that God could do all things, even bring life into these dead, dried up bones lying in a field. In response to Ezekiel's trust, the Almighty replied, concerning the bones:

"... Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them." Ezekiel 37:5-8.

The prophet watched the dry bones come together with a rattling noise and a shaking. The bones fell into their appointed place, and sinews appeared to hold them together to form a human skeleton. Then came the flesh and skin, forming men; but there was yet something lacking — breath — to make them living creatures. The Almighty supplied that need, as He spoke to Ezekiel:

“... Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind. Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.” Ezekiel 37:9-10.

We remember when Adam was formed from the dust of the ground:

“... The Lord GOD formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” Genesis 2:7.

Thus God gave life to Adam. The Almighty also takes life away, as Solomon declared:

“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit (breath) shall return unto God who gave it.”

Ecclesiastes 12:7.

Job recognized that God had this power, as he spoke:

“... Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither. The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” Job 1:21.

With this in mind, let us go back to Ezekiel, as he saw the dried bones assembled and made alive, as “an exceeding great army.” The Lord explained the purpose of this vision:

“... Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.” Ezekiel 37:11.

How well this described God’s people, with Jerusalem destroyed, the temple burned, and the nation of Israel having come to an end. We can understand how they felt: “... our hope is lost.” God continued to speak unto Ezekiel, encouraging those captives that their hope was not lost, if they would but trust Him:

“Therefore prophecy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves.

And shall put my spirit (breath) in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.”

Ezekiel 37:12-14.

The Almighty did revive Israel under Jeshua and Zerrubbabel after their seventy years in Babylon — not as a nation restored, but as a people subject to the rulership of the nations. The eventual fulfillment of this vision shown to Ezekiel will come to pass when the greater Jeshua — Jesus — shall return to establish the kingdom of God. Israel again will be a nation under the rulership of Jesus and His resurrected faithful, who will rule over that kingdom as kings and priests. This is the ultimate hope of Israel, of which those captives in Babylon said “. . . our hope is lost.”

What a help that vision would be to them, as Ezekiel revealed God’s message: Do not give up, trust in God; He has promised, and He will perform it at His appointed time.

The Almighty does not forsake those who trust in the hope of Israel, to be accomplished when Jesus Christ returns to assemble His people — even as those dry bones were assembled and given life before Ezekiel’s eyes.

God spoke to Ezekiel, reminding of His promise:

“. . . Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen . . . and bring them into their own land:

And I will make them one nation . . . and one king (Jesus) shall be king to them all: . . . And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.

Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant.

My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

Ezekiel 37:21-22, 24, 26-27.

We are in need of help, reminding us of God’s purpose — if we can keep our hopes fastened on God’s sure purpose, to cause some to come out of their graves and live eternally under His covenant of peace, promised from the beginning of His creation.

J.A.DeF.

### SIGNS OF HIS COMING

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb. . . ." (Revelation 13:11).

The European community grows apace, and it is now thirty years since Britain joined this political organisation. The British have considerable benefits as a result; for example they now have the right to live and work in any of the 15 European Union countries, and the right also to retire in any of them. There is also free healthcare for British travellers in these countries. Self-employed people are allowed to set up a company anywhere in the E.U. and students are allowed to study in a country of their choosing.

It is said that Britain has considerably benefitted economically by its joining the Community as it is now the largest and richest market in the world. The increased trade is calculated at, at least, fifteen per cent more than thirty years ago.

But still Britain drags its feet over joining the euro single currency. In doing so Britain keeps in closer contact with the United States; and it may be that this has to be, in fulfilment of prophecy and the Spirit's purpose.

Let us note what the prophecy says. The beast that arises is "like a lamb". It is significant that as the political amalgamation developed, so did religious ecumenical dialogue. The Archbishop of Canterbury extended his hand to Pope Paul VI in 1966. This led to the founding of the Anglican Centre in Rome, which is in the Doria-Pamphilj palace. Some significant pronouncements have taken place since that time. For example a Vatican pamphlet has suggested four kinds of "dialogue". As follows:-

A "dialogue of life" - - - which means a general coming together of different faiths in their everyday encounters. A "dialogue of deeds". A uniting of humanitarian campaigns. A "dialogue of specialists". Theologians of differing religions having discussion, to further appreciation of the positions of each other.

And a "dialogue of deeds". Discussion of personal religious experiences; to share these and their individual religious traditions with each other, "of prayer, contemplation, faith and duty."

The response from the Anglican Centre has been expressed that "Anglicans and Catholics both find that they have more in common than divides them." Following this the Pope said:-

"In the lacerated world of today, the duty of all Christians is

to work to avert the clash of civilisations which at times appears increasingly inevitable."

An Archbishop spokesman of the Catholic Church has gone on to say "that at a time of violence and terrorism Christians — while not forgetting their evangelical mission, have no choice but to reach out to the other great world religions and learn from them. Equally, members of other faiths must be open to Christianity, not least in countries where Christians are persecuted or suppressed. We are all on a pilgrimage, we are all seekers." This reaching out of the Vatican to other religions has had an effect. It has been referred to in the comment:-

"The pope has --- driven inter-faith dialogue forward --- to the point where some other faiths have AS GREAT OR EVEN GREATER ESTEEM FOR HIM THAN SOME CATHOLICS."

Let us note the prophetic description in the book of Revelation:-

"--- he had two horns like a lamb --- and he exerciseth all the power of the first beast, and causeth the earth --- to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed."

(Revelation 13:11-12).

How significant that the amalgamation which the prophecy refers to, has two horns. There are two potencies arising in the earth, and they have virtually arisen at one and the same time. One is the political confederacy of Europe, and the other is the getting together of religious groupings as never seen before.

**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 March brings the soon arrival of Spring, our mind goes to Solomon's words:

"For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." (Song of Solomon 2:11-13).

We long for the coming of the bridegroom to awaken His people to newness of life in His kingdom as promised from the beginning. May we hope to hear His words.

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord." (Matthew 25:21).

*J.A.DeF.*

**MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.**

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.00 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 2.00 p.m.

As Spring approaches the new shoots of dormant plant and flower appear once more. It is the beautiful blessing of God; and in it is the promise of the resurrection in Christ, which most assuredly is coming.

Our ongoing work of circularising the general public does bring at times an initial response, but interest in what we have to say is not maintained.