

MARCH 2005

A Monthly Magazine issued by

# 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

### CHOOSE OUT THE PATH FOR ME

In our worship of the Almighty this morning, we have sung: "Choose Out the Path For Me" - seeking His guidance in our living; and above all, in our efforts to walk in that strait and narrow way which leads to the goal of eternal life.

At the same time, we have read God's record of Paul's work from the time he was a young man. Paul (Saul) is first mentioned in the scriptures in Acts, at the stoning of Stephen when:

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

The time of Stephen's death was AD 34 or 35 - a short time after the ascension of the Lord Jesus. Paul was among those who persecuted Jesus' followers, having been given authority by the high priest to do so. We do not know whether Paul had ever actually seen Jesus, but he was a zealous adversary toward those who were His disciples. As he watched over the clothes of those who stoned Stephen, he would hear Stephen's last words as he died:

"... Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Acts 7:59.

We next hear of Paul as he was on his way to Damascus to further persecute the followers of Jesus. We know how God intervened, when there came a brilliant light from heaven, and Paul heard a voice saying:

"... Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Acts 9:4.

Blinded by the light, and fearful at the voice, Paul asked: "Who art thou Lord?" And the answer came:

"... I am Jesus whom thou persecutest:..." Acts 9:5.

In fear and awe, Saul replied

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

Saul, blinded for three days, was met by Ananias, who was directed by the Almighty in spite of his fear of Saul:

"... Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Acts 9:15-16.

Saul, whose name became Paul, was to be a "chosen vessel" to go about God's work with the Gentiles, kings, and his own people,

Israel. Here was a work, a path completely different from that which Paul had been following. God did indeed choose out a path for him, knowing that he was capable of doing His work as faithfully and diligently as he had done previously, before his miraculous conversion. This path was to lead Paul over a period of 30-some years in the work of a witness for God's truth, which he had so zealously fought against!

Immediately after his baptism by Ananias, and having received God's Holy Spirit for the work to be done, Paul was preaching to the Jews in Damascus who took counsel to kill him. His newly-found brethren, the disciples of Christ whom he had persecuted, let him down by the wall in a basket (Acts 9:25). So began the way God had chosen for him as His vessel. God had said:

“... I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake”  
Acts 9:16.

He did suffer many things in those 30-some years as a chosen vessel, walking in a way led by the Almighty. Twenty-five years after his conversion, Paul spoke to his brethren in Corinth (who previously were Gentiles) of his experiences this chosen way had brought about:

“... in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft (he wrote. 'I die daily').

Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one (as the law required).

Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned (left for dead but survived, he must have thought of Stephen), thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen (Israelites), in perils by the heathen (Gentiles), in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.”

II Corinthians 11:23-28.

Paul spoke of his “journeyings often.” He made three journeys as he was led in the path chosen for him by God, traveling

throughout Asia and Greece. The means of travel in those days were by foot, by camel, by donkey, and by sailing ships - all of which were slow perhaps achieving three miles per hour! Today we can travel 50-60 miles per hour by car; or 500 miles per hour by aircraft. He dedicated those 25 years to the work — the path the Almighty chose out for him — doing it faithfully, dutifully, in spite of every hindrance such journeyings entailed. His second journey was one which he wanted to make, as he said to Barnabas:

“. . . Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.” Acts 15:36.

This was about 25 years after he had begun to do the work as a “chosen vessel.” What care he had for all the ecclesias, seeking to encourage and strengthen them in the path that he had preached. No doubt it took months, if not years, to revisit those to whom he had taught the Gospel - that strait and narrow path which leads to the kingdom of God.

Paul must have felt overwhelmed at times as he suffered so many things; but help was given to continue his work. There were brethren who went with him: Luke, Barnabas, Timothy. He went to Jerusalem on several occasions, visiting his brethren there, seeking strength and endurance to continue his work. Above all, he was sustained by the word of God as he faced many difficulties and dangers. He would know of Jesus’ words spoken to His twelve apostles as He sent them forth to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel”:

“Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves;... But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. 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: 16-20.

Paul knew that help as he witnessed “before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.” It is not easy to “take no thought” or to not be anxious - overly concerned; but help was there for the twelve sent out, for Paul, and for all who are striving to walk in the way chosen out for them by the Almighty.

While at Ephesus, Paul encountered certain disciples and said to them:

“... Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit.

And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John’s baptism.

Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him (Jesus) which should come after him (John), that is, on Christ Jesus.

When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied”

Acts 19:2-6.

With the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the baptism of John came to an end. It would require a baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, which involves a burying of the old man of sin into His death, and a rising out of the waters as a new man, born of water and the Spirit. Thus, one becomes heir of the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as well as those made to David, of a kingdom, a throne, a Son, a house - all to endure for ever in Christ Jesus when He returns to gather His people.

Paul remained at Ephesus for three years (Acts 20:31), teaching and helping those who sought the way of life taught by the Gospel. He left Ephesus, going to Macedonia and Greece; then to Troas and Miletus, in the way chosen for him in his work. At Miletus, Paul:

“... had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia:

for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.”

Acts 20:16.

Mindful of his brethren at Ephesus:

“... he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons.” Acts 20:17-18.

In his three years with them, Paul was close to them in heart and mind, and explained how he must now move on to Jerusalem:

“And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that befall me there:

Save that the Holy Spirit witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.

But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Acts 20: 22-24.

Paul went, subject to God's choosing out the path for him. He was "bound" - or as the word means: closely knit, closely tied, in a bond with the Spirit of God, and ready for whatever He would require of him.

Paul said to his Ephesian brethren as he started for Jerusalem: "...that they should see his face no more..." Acts 20:38.

Other brethren warned him of the dangers of going to Jerusalem, but his reply was:

"... What mean ye to weep and to break my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done." Acts 21:13-14.

The will of the Lord was done, for Paul soon went to Rome, having appealed to Caesar. He was indeed a "chosen vessel" to bear Jesus' name "before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." We believe he died in Rome at the hands of Nero in approximately AD 66.

He wrote to his beloved Timothy (about AD 66):

"... I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course. I have kept the faith:

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

11 Timothy 4:6-8.

The word "course" involves running a race. When one runs in a race, it is required that he stay on the course or track, else he is disqualified. Paul, writing to his Hebrew brethren, exhorted them:

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight (handicap), and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

Hebrews 12:1.

Paul was one whose spirit was: "Choose out the path for me." He relied upon God, "bound in the Spirit," to do whatever God required.

It is our hope, our prayer, our striving to be joined to the Lord Jesus when He returns. If so blessed, we could be able to say to Paul: Thank you for your example, your determination, your patience as you ran your course, helping each of us in that hope of Israel, which kept you on that strait and narrow path, leading to the kingdom of God. Are we, Brethren and Sisters, determined to "go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem"?

*J.A.DeF.*

### THE WORK OF WITNESSING

We have recently been following the work of Paul from the record in Acts, and read of his witness to those in Athens, a city that he described as, "wholly given to idolatry". To examine Paul's witness helps us likewise, for we find ourselves today in a world full of idolatry and ignorance of God's true purpose with this earth.

In Acts chapter 17 we read of Paul as he waited in Athens for Silas and Timothy. He was stirred as he saw a city given to idolatry and therefore preached to them in the synagogue and market place of the Lord Jesus. Hearing the gospel message the Athenians responded saying:

"For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears:  
we would know therefore what these things mean.

(For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)"  
Acts 17:20-21

Paul stood in their midst and preached, using their own superstition, as he observed an altar erected "To The Unknown God". He preached of God the Creator and of His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, whom they knew not, and of the hope promised to those who believed. Many mocked this new idea of resurrection of which Paul preached, yet his work was not in vain for upon his departure from Athens we read:

"Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed:  
among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them."

Acts 17:34

Paul was quick to take advantage of an opportunity presented in Athens to preach the gospel, however, there was a right manner in which to do this - "seasoned with salt". Salt enhances the food it is added to, just as the spirit enhances those lives exercised thereby. It was through the spirit that Paul witnessed, and by that same spirit we are today to witness, not knowing the outcome, whether it will bear fruit or not, but doing so in the fashion expounded here by Paul. In a like manner, he wrote to those in Ephesus:

"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Ephesians 4:29

How important it is to remember that whatever is spoken to others may edify, allowing them to see the grace of God by example, if done in a right manner.

Paul knew at the time of his conversion that he would be used by God to broadcast the word among many, for the Lord had said of him:

". . . he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Acts 9:15-16

Paul was falsely accused by the Jews and brought before Felix, the governor of Judea, where again he seized upon the opportunity presented to witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God through the name of Jesus Christ. He defended the charges against him and witnessed to the grace of God in a right manner by saying:

"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men."

Acts 24:14,16

His manner ("a conscience void of offence"), would serve as an example, like the Lord Jesus', who preached in a spirit of gentleness and meekness.

Peter too spoke of how one should witness in that right spirit:

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ." I Peter 3:15-16



This has been the history of those who have witnessed concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. They have been persecuted and falsely called evildoers, but they endeavored to spread the gospel message faithfully through a good example of the hope that was within them.

Paul realized that his ministry was not to speak his own thoughts but to speak the word of God with fear and meekness, that he do all according to God's plan, knowing this was not his work for the calling was of God.

When the Lord Jesus began His ministry, his message was "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt.4:17). To those who would heed His words, He relayed the blessings that would come to those who would dedicate their lives to walking in God's way. The spirit of those who come to know that word must be exercised by it. How? The Lord Jesus explains:

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 5:14-16

How well this illustration describes the spirit of witnessing that must be within all - as a light, not hid under a bushel, but shining forth through good works and a faithful walk.

We today witness in sackcloth, without the power given to the apostles of old, yet we must be diligent in this work and not be discouraged because of the lack of interest, but persevere, redeeming the time through good works and a faithful example as His ministers.

M.C.S.

## MELCHIZEDEK

Recently an article appeared in a magazine not connected with ourselves, about the above subject. May we quote extracts from the same as follows:-

“The writer of Hebrews - - - described Melchizedek in this way:- ‘Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.’

(Hebrews 7:3)

“While some have tried to take this point literally, suggesting that perhaps Melchizedek was an angel, the argument in Hebrews demonstrates that these details are intended to be allegorical, God had other purposes in this man’s life. The silence of the narrative invites further thought: the issues relating to Melchizedek can help us understand his importance in the preservation of righteousness and truth before the Mosaic Law and his role in God’s future plans through the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Melchizedek appears quietly and suddenly in the Genesis narrative. He is introduced as King of Salem and priest of the most high God. He brought out bread and wine to the assembled gathering. Melchizedek blessed Abraham and was offered and accepted tithes from him. (These remarks are in reference to Abraham’s defeat of Chedorlaomer’s army who had captured along with others Abraham’s nephew Lot whom Abraham delivered, and on Abraham’s return to Canaan was met by Melchizedek). The remarks continue:- “As a king, Melchizedek must have had a kingdom and therefore subjects. His territory was Salem, known to us as Jerusalem - - - there were probably a few thousand people who were following God’s ways in the land at the time of Abraham and Melchizedek. In other words, two ecclesias existed in the middle of an evil world where Sodom set the standard for immorality. The existence of these two groups does not take account of Lot and his family. - - -

“The meeting between Abraham and Melchizedek at Shaveh was clearly important, but was it the first time these men had spent time together? Both men served the living God; both had direct communication with God, Melchizedek as God’s priest and Abraham through visions and visits by angels. Both men ruled over other people who would be directed toward worship and obedience of God. What would be more natural than that they should meet

occasionally, at least after this event, if they had not done so previously. Abraham had been instructed by God to walk the length and breadth of the land. The journeys of Abraham recounted for us in Genesis indicate that he had followed those instructions exactly. It therefore seems inconceivable that he had not visited Salem. Over fifteen years later Isaac was to be offered by Abraham on Mount Moriah. Most biblical scholars believe that the mountain was close to, if not in, Jerusalem, so the associations with Salem and by inference Melchizedek, even if by this time the great priest were dead, would have been very strong for Abraham.

“The tithes that Abraham paid to Melchizedek during the meeting at Shaveh also merit thought when considering other possible meetings between them. The tithes were an offering initially to Melchizedek, but really intended for God and as such were a form of thanksgiving sacrifice. Since Melchizedek was the priest of the most high God, he would also have been making sin offerings. That these were necessary had been laid down in Adam’s time, Genesis 4:3-5. --- It would be most apt for these two godly men to worship together at this particular meeting; and on other subsequent occasions. Melchizedek is undoubtedly an enigma, but he speaks to us from that far-off time of the love and continuity of God’s promises and His determination to give life to those who love Him and His Son.”

Dr. J. Thomas’s remarks on this subject

“Abraham died thirty-five years before Shem reached his five hundred and second year, after the flood. At this date, Isaac was one hundred and ten, and Jacob fifty; so that they were contemporary with Shem for these periods of their lives. There is no account of Shem’s death in the scripture; on the contrary, it is testified, as we have seen, that the person called Melchizedek still lives. Now Melchizedek is a word expressive of the character of the person who bore it. It signifies king of righteousness, or righteous king. He was the greatest king in Canaan, and reigned in Salem, which signifies PEACE, and is afterwards called Jerusalem; so that this righteous King was King of Peace. Shem, king of righteousness, and king of peace, and priest of the Most High God, is the type, contemporary with the holder of the promises, of the Seed, or Christ, on the throne of the Kingdom of God. The word of the oath, saying, ‘I have sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after

the order of Melchizedek' having changed the priesthood of the kingdom, 'there is made of necessity also a change of the law' of the state (Heb.7:12) No revolution was more complete and radical than that necessitated by the substitution of the Melchizedek for the Aaronic priesthood of the commonwealth of Israel. Under the Mosaic code the regal and pontifical offices were divided, and held by two distinct orders of men - - - when Christ shall give peace to the world, and judge among the nations, the kingly and priestly offices will be united, and their functions exercised by one person, even Jesus - - - as Melchizedek was."

### The Remnant's remarks

With the help of Dr. Thomas, may we make one or two observations. Shem was called of God as Abraham was, but that was a long time before Abraham. So as the faithful leader in Salem, it was right that Abraham should acknowledge Shem's righteous position in the giving to him of tithes.

What a unique position Shem had, who lived longer than Abraham. He was one of eight persons who had lived before Noah's flood, and having continued such a long time, even outliving Abraham, the people who had multiplied around him were in the position to regard Shem "without father, without mother, without descent", for the long continuance made it so appear. But there were not "two ecclesias"; Shem's was the ecclesia; and when Abram was directed to leave Ur of the Chaldees, it was for the purpose of being brought to Shem, and to the ecclesia. The fellowship of being drawn to such a position is demonstrated when "Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: AND HE WAS THE PRIEST OF THE MOST HIGH GOD. And he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth - - - ." (Genesis 14:18-19) Shem could not have given such a profound assurance to Abraham, had he not been in fellowship with Abraham and aware of God's call of Abraham to the Truth, and God's ever developing purpose.

ABIBLECLASS

**“EXHORTING ONE ANOTHER ... MORE.  
AS YE SEE THE DAY APPROACHING”**

Hebrews 10:25

Paul was writing to his Hebrew brethren who had been Jews, but were now followers of Jesus Christ. We read his words:

“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.” Hebrews 10:1.

The law was a schoolmaster to lead unto Christ. He had come, taught, had died and ascended to His Father, bringing an end to the law, through a new and better covenant of promises.

Paul wrote his epistle to the Hebrews in AD 64 - six years before the temple and Jerusalem were destroyed by the Romans. We believe Paul died at the hands of Nero within a few years. Paul labored to help his brethren who, having been Hebrews, were familiar with the law, yet needed to perceive more clearly the work of Jesus in fulfilling the law. To this end he wrote:

“But this man (Jesus), after he had offered one sacrifice (His life) for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; For by one offering he hath perfected (completed) for ever them that are sanctified. This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.”

Hebrews 10:12,14,16-17.

This was the new covenant made through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus to fulfill all righteous as the Messiah, promised in the law, the Psalms, and the prophets.

We are Gentiles, and as such were aliens to the hope of Israel. Through this new covenant, by baptism we are buried into the death of Christ, and rise from the waters a new man, with the old man of flesh crucified with Christ, thereby we become inheritors of the promises made to Abraham and David. Paul wrote to his brethren, and to us today:

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water (baptized). Let us hold

fast the profession (confession) of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)”

Hebrews 10:22-23.

How blessed we are to have such a precious hope of eternal life, made possible by the obedience of Jesus Christ, as He offered Himself to His Father without spot or blemish. How do we respond to the mercy and grace of God, as He calls a few to be His people, redeemed from among men? Again Paul helps us:

“...Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

Hebrews 10:24-25.

How are we to “consider one another”? The word also means to behold, to discover, to perceive - implying a close observance, a knowledge of one another’s need for help in time of trial, in illness; and particularly in spiritual needs to be encouraged in the way which leads to the hope of eternal life. As a need is perceived, what can be done to fulfill that need? Paul urged: “... provoke unto love and to good works.” To provoke involves a stirring up, an incitement, an active encouragement. At times we need such an encouragement, as we may be slow to respond, may be distracted from the main objective of living in a way that pleases God. Those who consider or perceive such a need come alongside, and with love, can incite to “love and good works” - thereby strengthening the bonds of love found in His House. How can we provoke such love and good works? Again Paul helps:

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

Hebrews 10:25

We are allowed to assemble together each first day of the week, to remember the victory of the Lord Jesus, which makes possible the hope of eternal life when He returns. We do this in remembrance of His sacrifice, we rejoice in God’s grace, and are strengthened in the struggle to walk in that strait and narrow path that leads to the kingdom of God. Certainly one who truly perceives God’s mercy and grace would not forsake the assembling together, but would come with gratitude and thanksgiving for the privilege. A part of the help received at this assembly is not only the love expressed in

a brother's exhortation, but in the comfort, consolation, entreaty which is a part of the fellowship with God and His Son, expressed by Jesus:

"...where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20.

Does not this mercy and grace incite one to love and good works - especially as one is reminded that the day of His return, to this earth is coming nearer, as we see signs in the earth that proclaim its approach? Jesus encouraged His disciples as He spoke of His return to accomplish His Father's purpose with this earth:

"... when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.

Jesus spoke these words almost 2000 years ago. Paul exhorted his Hebrew brethren just over 30 years after Jesus' ascension to His Father. As the day of the Lord is drawing near, are we provoking one another to "love and to good works"? Are we exhorting one another, encouraging in the way of salvation? Are we close enough to perceive the needs of our brethren and sisters to know how best we can provoke and exhort in time of need? Are we looking up, lifting up our heads, praying for His return, with hope and yet with fear?

*J.A.DeF.*

## INSTRUCTION IN PRAYER

We cannot help but be impressed by the power of prayer seen in the Lord Jesus' final hours as Luke records:

"And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation."

Luke 22:39-40

Facing his final trial and suffering, He sought strength and help from the Father through prayer. Yet even in these last hours, His care was for his followers, that they too be strengthened against the power of their flesh. Here is an important lesson that in communication with God, great help is given to overcome.

In Matthew this same circumstance is recorded:

“Then cometh Jesus with them into a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

And he took with him Peter and the two Sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.”

Matthew 26:36-38

The Lord Jesus agonized, recognizing the spirit was willing but the flesh was weak and recoiled from the pain that lay ahead.

Part of His sorrow was for His disciples, knowing He would soon leave them as sheep without a shepherd, for His mind was focused on the Father and those who God had given Him.

We recall that the disciples early in His ministry asked for help in knowing how to pray, and He instructed them as follows:

“And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of man. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.”

Matthew 6:5-8

He taught that the Father looks into the hearts of those who seek him in prayer, but the main point is to “ask”, to show a desire to be at one with Him and receive His help. The Lord Jesus received that help and left an example of how one should pray (“After this manner therefore pray ye”), covering the aspects of praise to the Father, thanksgiving for His blessings and the need to not only seek forgiveness but to also offer it freely to others. The world has taken His guidelines and turned them into a specific prayer which they call, “The Lord’s Prayer”, repeated verbatim by millions, but without true understanding.

The Lord Jesus’ instructions to His followers began first with



the need to sanctify and glorify God when coming before His presence in prayer:

“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.” Matthew 6:9

The next aspect of prayer He taught, was to acknowledge God’s plan with this earth; “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (verse 10) - a recognition of the promise given to Israel and those who desire to become spiritual Israelites, that a kingdom of peace will be established and ruled by Christ and His saints, as promised by God and recorded in the law and the prophets.

“Give us this day our daily bread” (verse 11). God knows that man needs sustenance in many ways - clothing, shelter, food, a livelihood, as well as the daily strengthening from His word to feed the spirit man. This was just as true for the Lord Jesus, for we read of his forty days of temptation in the wilderness:

“Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

But he answered and said, It is written, MAN SHALL NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT BY EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDETH OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.”

Matthew 4:1-4

He knew the word of God and three times was tempted by His own flesh, but called upon that word to quell His flesh nature which urged Him to use the new found spiritual power from God to satisfy its needs.

Going back to the next aspect of prayer, the Lord instructed His followers to ask God for forgiveness: “And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (verse 12). Forgiveness is so needful, for daily we stumble out of the way, and need to be cleansed because of our sins. However, if we are unwilling to forgive others who may in turn offend us, then we cannot expect the Father to forgive our iniquities. The ability to forgive is the working of God’s word and spirit of love within one.

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (verse 13). Knowing how prone the flesh is to temptation, the Lord Jesus reminded His disciples to pray for strength lest they fall into

the temptation that is common to all flesh.

“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen” (verse 13). It is God’s kingdom that the Lord Jesus will rule over, but given to Him only as he submitted according to God’s purpose. All those who desire to be part of that kingdom must endeavor to follow after His example and submit their living to God, according to His plan.

Jesus knew he would shortly leave His disciples, and even with the dread of that final suffering close at hand, His last thoughts were for the care of His followers, and not only them, but all those who would in the future believe on Him through their ministry:

“As thou has sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.”

John 17: 18-22

There is only one true understanding of His way, and in love, God has preserved that word in order that man may learn the hope of life everlasting. In love also has His son, the Lord Jesus died, that the door may be opened into God’s presence through his perfect sacrifice, that this hope may be realized.

There is a means to overcome the world and its temptations, through communing with God for help and strength to follow after His Son’s example. He has left help for us today, by giving us instruction in how to pray acceptably to the Father through His name. We know the time of His return must be near, and while we look for it in hope and fear, we are reminded of His warning:

“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

M.C.S.

## SIGNS OF HIS COMING

“ --- In the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword. --- ” (Ezekiel 38:8)

A question raised recently has a significant tone; it said, “Will 2005 be the year peace breaks out in the Middle East? The late leader of the Palestinians started the intifada four years ago, which certainly was a move away for peace, but now he is dead, and it reported that the likely leader of the Palestinians who is to take his place, has renounced violence and favours a two-state solution with Israel and a newly independent Palestine living side by side.” Egypt has offered to help by providing peace keeping troops in Gaza and also to increase efforts on the border to prevent efforts of any illegal faction smuggling weapons into Gaza.

Britain’s Prime Minister has been trying to help the Palestinians to prepare for statehood, with leaders able to set up a sound economy; and America’s President declares his support for a two-state solution. Also the President of the World Bank has pledged to double its aid to the Palestinians on condition their leadership “reins in its terrorist operations.”

Israel’s Prime Minister, once regarded as a hard-line personality has been pressing ahead with plans to withdraw forces from Gaza and areas of the West Bank, and opinion polls reveal a substantial majority of Israel’s people support him. Britain’s Prime Minister has not only been helping verbally the efforts towards reconciliation, he has also given practical help by sending 54 police cars and training experts to set up a control centre in Palestinian Ramallah, so that effective anti-terrorist work can prevail. It is also significant that Egypt’s President has called for a new initiative of the Gulf States (Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, The United Arab Emirates and Oman) to establish diplomatic ties with Israel.

All these efforts make the question “will the year 2005 bring peace?” a feasible one. But what of the general world position? A recent media comment read as follows:-

“The Cold War supposedly came to an end when the Berlin Wall was pulled down in 1989. Instead, 15 years later, we find the Russians still view the West as a threat and have been developing even more destructive nuclear weapons. --- It is a consequence of the U.S. decision to develop a missile defence shield.

Despite the hand of friendship held out to the Russian Premier --- he has chosen instead to turn back the clock and resume nuclear proliferation ---. It comes at a time when we are faced with the common evil of --- fundamentalist terrorism.” The comment has partially been brought about by the knowledge

that Russia has developed a new ballistic missile which has a range of 6000 miles. The Russian leader made the nasty comment, "We have conducted tests of the latest nuclear rocket systems - - -. I am sure that in the near future weapons will appear which other nuclear powers do not and will not possess. A Russian official explains the Topol m flies into space, but when it penetrates the atmosphere it begins flying like a cruise missile." The Russian leader has promised he will build up the Russian armed forces. And so for all the talk about World cooperation in various national agreements, including the U.S. agreement of 1972 with Moscow called the ABM Treaty, a situation is developing which, in scriptural language, can be called North opposed to the South. As Ezekiel prophesied:-

"I - - - will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel." (Ezekiel 39:2)

In the south will be the opposing power which will challenge this action as prophetically described:-

"Art thou come to take a spoil? and hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey?" (Ezekiel 38:13)

The solution for this new affliction for the Jews will be a direct heavenly intervention, as scripturally promised:-

"And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the LORD GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel.- - -"

(Ezekiel 38:18-19)

The Jews, sadly, continue to be opposed and despised in a world that supposedly is trying to overcome racial disharmony. A recent report revealed a powerful undercurrent of anti-Semitism. For example hatred of Jews was shown when graffiti was again seen on many tombstones in a Jewish cemetery in France, and this was the third French cemetery to be so affected last year. Hitler's name was painted on the headstones and also swastikas, and this was not the first time this particular cemetery had been so attacked. In the Czech town of Hranice also many Jewish tombstones have been toppled. Jewish groups say there is a spate of attacks around the world, causing Jews to feel more threatened than at any time for the last 50 years.

Obviously there is considerable anti-Jewish, anti-Israel outlook amongst the nations, and this will lead to that final evil event as described in prophecy:-

"In the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword. - - -"

(Ezekiel 38:8)

What a sign is now seen, when Israel is moving towards a more peaceful situation, the Northern Power is increasing its armed forces.

**NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS FOR MARCH 2005**

HAMBURG, NEW YORK, Corner Southwestern Blvd. & Pleasant Ave.

Sunday Breaking of Bread: 11:30 am

Sunday Afternoon Class: 1:45 pm

Midweek Bible Class: Fredonia, Hamburg & Forestville

Every Third Week: Revelation Study

As these words are being written, the world is shaken by the devastating earthquakes and subsequent tidal waves, which have caused a vast multitude of deaths and utter destruction in eleven countries.

Here is an example of God's power and man's inability to cope with it. We tremble and fear as we contemplate His might. Yet we know that this same power works on behalf of those who are striving to give glory and honor to Him.

The Lord Jesus speaking of the time of His return to the earth warned of the signs of His coming: "great earthquakes in divers places", "the sea and the waves roaring", "distress of nations, with perplexity".

As we see these signs coming to pass, it brings to mind Jesus' further words: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads: for your redemption draweth nigh".

*J.A.DeF*

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.00 am.

Thursdays: Bible Class 2.00 pm.

We are still getting some response from Ireland to our Postal invitations offering our booklets on the subject of Doctrine and or Prophecy.

This encourages us to continue this method of witness, though in other areas there is virtually no interest.