

**MARCH 2006**

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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"**

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**AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD  
"YE SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD"**

In the last several months, we have been listening to the prophets whom God sent, "rising early and sending them." Their prophecy covered over two hundred years. Isaiah prophesied 62 years; Jeremiah, for 41 years, Ezekiel (to whom we are currently listening), 21 years; and Daniel for 73 years - a period of 226 years from 760 BC to 534 BC.

These were difficult times for Israel. In 721 BC, the ten tribes were conquered by Shalmanezzer, king of Assyria, and were scattered through other lands. In 588 BC, the remaining two tribes were conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, ending the nation of Israel, and the times of the Gentiles began. During these times of hardship, God sent His prophets to warn Israel of their failure to keep His commandments. There were only a few - a remnant - who listened, taking to heart and mind the word of God through these prophets.

We are presently listening to Ezekiel, sent to those in captivity in Babylon. He was given an important work as God's prophet, a watchman, warning those in Babylon, and encouraging them to rely upon God, and to turn away from worshipping idols. It is interesting that Ezekiel's name is mentioned only twice in the book of Ezekiel. First, by the river Chebar as God called him to be His messenger to the captives in Babylon:

"The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest ... in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was there upon him."

Ezekiel 1:3.

The second mention of Ezekiel's name was to Israel:

"Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all, that he hath done shall ye do: and when this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

...thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I am the LORD."

Ezekiel 24:24,27.

What a great responsibility this was - to submit to God's hand upon him, to be a sign and a watchman, warning of danger; and "they shall know that I am the LORD." In the book of Ezekiel, this requirement - "and they shall know that I am the LORD" - occurs 51 times, as God spoke through Ezekiel, reminding that His name is Yahweh: I was, I am, and I will be - the eternal God, able to do all

things. The Almighty first spoke these words after warning Israel:

“...behold, I, even I, will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places.

And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and ye shall know that I am the LORD.”  
Ezekiel 6:3,7.

Ezekiel conveyed this warning in 594 BC. In 588 BC, Jerusalem was destroyed, the temple torn down, and the end of the nation of Israel came to pass. Further, Ezekiel was to warn:

“He that is far off (in Jerusalem) shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near shall fall by the sword: and he that remaineth (in Jerusalem) and is besieged shall die by the famine; thus will I accomplish my fury upon them.

Then shall ye know that I am the LORD, when their slain men shall be among their idols...

So will I stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate ... and they shall know that I am the LORD.”

Ezekiel 6:12 -14.

Ezekiel continued to warn those in Babylon, and also encouraged them to look for God’s promise of deliverance from captivity:

“... Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name;

When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies’ lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations;

Then shall they know that I am the Lord their GOD, which caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen; but I have gathered them into their own land, and have left none of them any more there.

Neither will I hide my fate any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD”  
Ezekiel 39:25,27-29.

As Ezekiel was called to be a prophet and a watchman, he was encouraged by a vision of a whirlwind, a great cloud, a fire,

and a brightness:

“Out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures (cherubim).” Ezekiel 1:5.

Also he saw the throne of God and a “brightness round about” - and he was told:

“...This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.” Ezekiel 1:28.

“And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee.

And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel...

I do send thee unto them, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD.

And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear... yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.” Ezekiel 2:1,3-5.

The Almighty spoke further to Ezekiel in a vision:

“Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.” Ezekiel 3:17.

Thus commissioned by the Almighty, Ezekiel was a prophet and a watchman unto his people who were fellow-captives in Babylon. In addition, Ezekiel was made dumb-unable to speak - unless God opened his mouth:

“...I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; He that heareth, let him hear, and he that forbear, let him forbear: for they are a rebellious house.” Ezekiel 3:27.

We have read this morning the 12th chapter of Ezekiel, where the prophet was to be a sign to those left in Jerusalem during the time of Zedekiah, king of Judah - 594 BC. Ezekiel was to move his “stuff” out of his house as a sign that God would remove from Jerusalem those who still dwelt there. God spoke to Ezekiel:

“Say thou unto them. Thus saith the Lord GOD; This burden concerneth the prince (Zedekiah) in Jerusalem, and all the

house of Israel that are among them.

Say, I am your sign: like as I have done (moved), so shall it be done unto them: they shall remove and go into captivity. And the prince that is among them shall ... go forth ... he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground, with his eyes.

...I will bring him to Babylon ... yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there.

And I will scatter toward every wind all that are about him ... and I will draw out the sword after them.

And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall scatter them among the nations and disperse them in the countries.”

Ezekiel 12:10-15.

Within six years 588 BC, all that Ezekiel prophesied came to pass. King Zedekiah fled through a gate in Jerusalem's walls, but was captured by the Babylonians. As he was brought to King Nebuchadnezzar, his sons were killed before him, and his own eyes were put out; so that was the last he saw, for he lived in blindness for the rest of his life - a blind captive, in Babylon. Israel ceased to be a nation; Jerusalem was destroyed; and the temple was devastated. The Almighty said to Ezekiel:

“For I am the LORD. I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass, it shall be no more prolonged; for in your days, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD.

Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are far off.

Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; There shall none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord GOD.”

Ezekiel 12:25,27-28.

Israel did forbear, did not believe God's words, were indeed a rebellious house, for they despised God's prophecy. Can we see why six years later, Israel was gone as a nation? They refused to perceive that He is the LORD, the Almighty, Yahweh - capable of all things, in His own time.

How does this apply to ourselves, Brethren and Sisters? Peter

helps us as he wrote 650 years after the time of Ezekiel:

“This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour.

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, When is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” II Peter 3:1-4.

There are scoffers - those who mock, are false teachers who are adversaries, tempters: as the serpent in the garden who said to Eve: “Ye shall not surely die.” (Geneses 3:4). Peter sought to stir up his brethren’s minds to beware lest anyone forget that the adversary is always there - walking about, scoffing at the word of God, and seeking to devour as a raging lion (I Peter 5:8-9). Peter further reminds us:

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night ... Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God... Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” II Peter 3:9-14.

Do we not need stirring up on occasion? To “stir up” means to be involved, aroused, fully awake, aware of what is required. Peter sought to stir up his brethren’s minds, to bring to remembrance the words spoken by holy prophets. He continues:

“Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God...” II Peter 3:12.

“Hasting unto” gives the thought of awaiting eagerly, or to make haste unto - looking with hope to the promises and blessings, of which the prophets of old spoke; and more recently, the work of the apostles, such as Peter, and Jesus Himself, who preached the gospel. Our hope, our “hasting unto” is expressed by those faithful ones under the altar, who cry out with a loud voice:

“How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and  
avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?  
For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be  
able to stand?” Revelation 6:10,17.

As we continue our reading of the prophets, do we grow in a knowledge and understanding of the Lord’s mercy and grace? Do we look for the fulfillment of His words, as Ezekiel warns:

“...There shall none of my words be prolonged any more;  
but the word which I have spoken (through the prophets)  
shall be done, saith the Lord GOD.” Ezekiel 12:28.

J.A.DeF.

## TITUS

We have recently finished reading the epistle written by Paul to his brother Titus, a brother in faith of whom Paul called:

“...Titus, mine own son after the common faith” Titus 1:4.

They knew a close bond because of the knowledge and faith they shared in Christ and Paul’s purpose in writing was to encourage not only Titus but other brethren and sisters through the ages to walk in this endeavor.

Titus’ work of witnessing was to be carried out on the isle of Crete, as Paul writes:

“For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set  
in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in  
every city, as I had appointed thee.” Titus 1:5.

Titus' work on Crete was to firmly establish an ecclesia there of those who could be touched by the gospel of Christ. But just as there were devout believers on Crete, there were those of a contrary mind of whom Paul warns Titus:

"For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:

Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

One' of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.

This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;

Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth." Titus 1:10-14.

It is difficult to rebuke, yet it is required at times when the purity of the Truth is being corrupted by the influences of the flesh. Paul gives a guide to Titus of how the different members of God's household at Crete should behave - aged men and women, young men and women and those who were occupied as servants:

"That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.

In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity.

Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;

Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."

Titus 2:2-10.

The basis for this hope of salvation, which Paul emphasizes, is only possible through the grace of God and the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ:

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.” Titus 2:13-15.

Paul knew it would be difficult for Titus to rebuke through this work of witnessing, but if he did so with an aim to keep the purity of Truth alive, his work would prosper according to God's will.

In this epistle, Paul wrote to encourage Titus saying, “Let no man despise thee”. This word “despise” translates as, “to think around”. There were no doubt many in Crete, as there are today, who wrest the word of God, twisting its meaning to their own pleasure and convenience. In order to preach that word in its purity, Titus was encouraged by Paul to persist and not let any “think around” the knowledge of the gospel - the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ.

We know from the record of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, that He too was tempted by His own thinking which sought to “think around” the hardships that faced Him. Yet in the spirit of Truth, He confronted that thinking with an answer from the word of God - giving the flesh no satisfaction.

Paul knew Titus' work would only be pleasing to God as he taught the denial of fleshly thinking with its ungodly lusts - turning minds from their own thinking to a knowledge of the Truth.

“Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men. And let our's also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.”

Titus 3:1-2,14.

Titus worked as a laborer in the Lord's vineyard on Crete, preaching the gospel of Christ to all there whose heart could be touched, receiving his elder brother Paul's care and tutelage. This epistle written to encourage him in this work has been preserved for our admonition as well, that we too may learn to walk soberly as lightstands, witnessing to what we have been privileged to receive from His word.

M.C.S.

## MANKIND

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

(Genesis 1:26-27)

Moses wrote the above words 3,200 years ago. Fearsome animals, however powerful, were patently subservient to man at that time. How much more since however gigantic their frame, and however swift they be.

Moses wrote the Truth, but sadly mankind has distorted this. There is an undermining of the simple, convincing perception of scripture, through so called scholastic teaching, saying that in earlier times there was a squat, apelike general appearance, of the peoples inhabiting this planet. Then over the years a gradual development into straighter taller beings occurred. Think how such a suggestion dishonours God. Through Moses, the spirit declares, "God created man in his own image." It was a creation which did not have to develop. Men and women in that early time were just the same as men and women as seen today.

Text books speak of men developing in various phases of improving techniques. It is said there was the "Stone Age", followed by the "Bronze Age", then came the "Iron Age". To a degree, this suggestion fails to do justice to simple truth, from God, that from

the Beginning He gave mankind special ability. The Most High clearly stated that man would "have dominion" over other creatures; and the ability given to Adam is expressed in this Genesis testimony that God "put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it" (Genesis 2:15). This Genesis account then goes on to describe the longevity of Adam's immediate descendants. The details clearly mark out the number of years that elapsed to the time of Noah.

Sixteen and a half centuries passed by, a time of mankind's very great deteriorating behaviour, and then came divine intervention;-

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart."

(Genesis 6:5-6)

So came Noah's flood, with only Noah and his family saved in the ark. The length of the ark was three hundred cubits, the breadth fifty cubits and the height thirty cubits. We ask the question, where do stone implements, of a stone age, fit into a preparing of such a vessel? Of course it wasn't a "Stone Age" for Noah. Scripture shows clearly that God-given ability was invested in man from the earliest time; note the following testimony of scripture:

"And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle.

And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.

And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron. - -"

(Genesis 4:20-22)

Jabal, and Jubal were seventh generation from Adam, and were producing brass and iron (they were descendants of Cain).

Looking at various monuments of the past, let us consider one of them that exists in Wiltshire, in Britain. It has been described as a wonder of the world and is called Stonehenge. This is a massive stone circle erectment, said to be 5,100 years old. Scholars say they regard it as a mystery. How could early mankind have reared up such huge slabs of stone, supporting on the top of these columns

other huge slabs horizontally? Simple scriptural truth gives us the answer. Mankind WAS NOT made primitive by the Most High. Oh yes, some in the past led primitive lives. Let us pause here, and consider what we are also shown in the present. In this modern, sophisticated age, there are also peoples living in a crude, primitive existence. They can be found in parts of Africa and South America. Primitive existences were not there in the Beginning, it came about through deteriorating behaviour.

The Truth concerning mankind is found in God's holy word!

### A BIBLE CLASS

#### "THEY THAT TRUST IN THE LORD SHALL BE AS MOUNT ZION"

Psalm 125:1

These words of David express his mind as he wrote this Psalm of ascent - a going up to Jerusalem. He was mindful of God's grace in the promises given to him of a Son, a king, a throne, a house, and a kingdom to last forever. All this is to come to pass when Jesus Christ returns to establish the kingdom of Israel. As he meditated upon God's purpose, David looked to that time - his eyes and heart fastened upon these "sure mercies of David."

Today Jerusalem and Israel are embroiled in enmity with the Palestinians, each claiming the land of Israel. Israel seeks peace with its Arab neighbors, but to date has not achieved its determination. Indeed, the land will not know a lasting peace until the greater Son of David accomplishes God's purpose with Israel. Then there will be the peace of **Jerusalem** which shall endure for ever. The name Jerusalem is made up of two Hebrew words: (1) Yarah - to flow as a river; and (2) Shalom - peace. The Almighty spoke of Jerusalem through His prophet Isaiah:

"...I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream:

...so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem."

Isaiah 66:12-13.

David had God's promises in mind as he wrote this Psalm of degrees - a going up to Jerusalem in heart and mind. His conviction was:

"They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.

As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth and for ever."

Psalm 125:1-2.

This was David's faith, his trust in God's word, His promises which were as sure as were the mountains round about Jerusalem. One of the mountains is mount Moriah, where Solomon, at God's instruction, built His temple. There is also mount Zion - Jerusalem, the city of David, where he reigned as king over Israel. Those who trust in the Lord, as did David, are as unmovable as these mountains - knowing that God's word, His promises are steadfast, and cannot be removed.

We might ask; How can we trust in the Lord? The Hebrew word used here for "trust" is confidence, security, hope - a place where one can go for refuge and be helped and protected.

The prophet Elisha trusted in God, as the king of Syria sought his life, sending chariots and horsemen to capture Elisha, his tormentor. Elisha's servant, fearing for his life, asked the prophet:

"...Alas, my master! how shall we do?" II Kings 6:15.

Elisha, having utmost trust in God's care, replied:

"Fear not for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw: and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha"

II Kings 6:16-17.

Elisha saw through the eyes of faith, and trusted in the power of God, which his servant did not see, for he lacked in trust. Elisha trusted in his God, as did David, who expressed that trust:

"The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them"

Psalm 34:7.

David and Elisha, and all who truly trust in the Lord, know His presence around them, as surely as the mountains of Jerusalem surround His city of peace.

His prophet Isaiah also revealed his trust in God:

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength.” Isaiah 26:3-4.

Can we understand David’s musing as he fastened his eyes and heart upon mount Zion, in his striving to go up to the city of peace?

“They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever” Psalm 125:1.

He saw the strength of God in the mountains round about Jerusalem. As he experienced God’s guidance and protection, he grew in trust and determination to be as unmovable as these mountains. He knew the sure mercies that God promised to him, and he looked for the time when:

“...it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it.

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.” Isaiah 2:1-3.

As we often sing the words of David, let us keep them in our hearts and minds:

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea;

Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, Selah.

There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.

God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.  
The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.  
Selah”  
Psalms 46:1-5,11.

J.A.DeE.

**“FOR THE LORD SHALL COMFORT ZION”**

**Isaiah 51:3**

In our study of Isaiah’s words, we find they were addressed to a wayward people, to awaken them to their covenant relationship with Him. From the first chapter of Isaiah we read of why the prophet was sent to Judah and Jerusalem:

“Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.

The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.”  
Isaiah 1:2-4.

They had forsaken God’s precepts, therefore He called them a “sinful nation”, yet in mercy He desired them to turn from their iniquity and walk in righteousness, to be once more under the shelter of His covenant:

“I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people”.  
Isaiah 51:16.

In kindness He gave a warning of the punishment that would come upon those who refused to hear or change the error of their ways:

“These two things are come unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee? Desolation, and destruction, and the famine, and the sword: by whom shall I comfort thee?” Isaiah 51:19.

In this effort of repentance, Isaiah urged them to look to the history of God’s people - to Abraham and the covenant that was made because of his faithfulness:

“Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.” Isaiah 51:2.

They were Abraham’s seed, yet by the time of Isaiah, His people had turned their back upon God, following instead the ways of the heathen around them in idolatry. However, to those who looked in faith to the promises extended through Abraham, to be attained in the kingdom age, is this reminder:

“For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.” Isaiah 51:3.

From the above consideration, “Zion” is used as another term for Jerusalem. This is the place where God will place His name as the capital of His kingdom on earth when Christ returns to rule over it. The comfort of God will come through Jesus Christ as the King of that peaceful kingdom, where justice and truth will prevail for He is the true comfort of God’s people as the only means of salvation, Zion is used not only to describe the perfected city of Jerusalem in the kingdom age, but also collectively as God’s spiritual people - the Bride of Christ:

“Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” Isaiah 52:1,7.

"O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!

Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him."  
Isaiah 40:9-10.

What a comfort Isaiah's words would be to those in his day, who looked for the hope of Israel to be established by the greater Son of David at the end of God's purpose, when these words will be fulfilled.

"Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.

The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. "  
Isaiah 52:9-10.

In John's vision of God's completed purpose with the earth, he saw new Jerusalem or Zion, as the dwelling place of God with His people;

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."  
Revelation 21:2-4.

This is the covenant with Abraham fulfilled and brought to fruition in the kingdom age under the righteous rule of Christ and His saints.

What a comfort to come, not only for His people, but for all the world who will yield themselves to walk in His precepts and

dwell at peace in Zion. With the curse lifted and the earth once more a place of peace and beauty, as it was first created in Eden, it will bring forth fruit without effort and its inhabitants will enjoy this continual blessing and bounty without labor, illness, suffering or sorrow. Each man will be schooled in the precepts of God as taught by Christ and the saints and having accepted Christ in faith as their salvation, will share this time of joy and gladness.

Knowing the history of man - a time never without war, corruption or injustice because of the cruel aims of man, it is almost unimaginable to picture the world as it will be in the kingdom age. A time when the earth will be truly comforted by the hand of God, the Father of all comfort.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort."

II Corinthians 1:3.

M.C.S.

## SIGNS OF HIS COMING

“For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” (Matthew 24:38—39)

The record concerning Noah’s time was that:

“The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.” (Genesis 6:11)

Comparing that description to the present day situation, to say the earth is currently suffering very much violence is certainly not an exaggeration. In Manchester, teams of well intentioned people are getting together for the purpose of “targeting young people --- in a bid to cut crime and improve community relations.” They are organised to patrol the streets in groups of four who endeavour to approach young people to try to divert them from gun crime and gang related violence.

Recent news reports reveal how cruel and evil is behaviour, especially amongst the younger generation. For example an elderly widow (aged 75) protested to a young woman at a food store who pushed into a queue which were waiting to pay for their shopping. The young person was angry at the rebuke, produced a knife, and plunged the blade into the aged person’s back, (obviously the irate younger person had no respect or sympathy for elderly people). Sadly the 75 year old lady died on the way to hospital. Another recent violent incident was when a 12 year old schoolgirl had intervened when she saw a girl of a similar age bullying another young person, a boy. The angry reaction against her protest was extreme. The bully repeatedly slashed the schoolgirl’s face, almost blinding her. Such incidents are no longer rare. Violence is now commonplace. Violent crime in Britain has soared six per cent in three months. The British Government’s Home Office figures on human behaviour is that violence is now at its highest level in history.

Dishonesty is also on the increase. A dismayed young person recently lamented over money disappearing from his Bank Account. Some of the items that were fraudulent were of transactions at garage petrol pumps, “forty eight pounds here and fifty pounds there, and sometimes: the card had been used twice in a day, and I do not even have a car”, he said. It appears that some one had acquired his Bank Account details and forthwith had forged a dummy bank card, enabling purchases to be made from his current account. This dismayed young sufferer, was upset by the length of time it took for the fraud to be dealt with.

The state of society is revealed by warnings that are now being issued on the need for great care to be exercised to avoid becoming victims of fraud. For example:—

1/ Do not write your personal identity bank number down.  
2/ Do not put old bank statements straight in the bin with your rubbish. Either burn these old statements, or put them through a shredding machine.

3/ Be wary when pressing personal number into a cash machine, to draw out cash, in case someone is looking over your shoulder.

4/ Never verify your bank details on the telephone to anyone claiming to be from your bank. Call your bank first to ask if it has authorised the contact.

5/ Look at your bank statements regularly for any items that you do not recognise.

At the time of Noah, the situation was described as corrupt before God. Is it any different today? And considering the violence amongst the young ones, a statistic that is thought-provoking, was the recent comment on what is being conveyed on Television Screens:-

“The average American child will have seen around 10,000 violent deaths on television by the age of 10, and an estimated 25,000 by the time they have completed their schooling.”

So young people, obviously, are affected in their formative years by an environment, even though it be an acted one, that is far removed from peaceful tranquility. Additionally, what of suicide bombings that are taking place in various parts of the world? The perpetrators set about detonating the explosive devices strapped to them at places where they can cause the most destruction of their fellow creatures. The so-called ideology in such evil, is the glorification of violence against others by the giving of self in personal sacrifice. An example of this evil, so called ideology was the report of a comment of a young woman who encouraged her brother to become a suicide bomber. He blew himself up in Israel murdering three people and leaving sixty five injured. This sister had sent a special message to her brother saying, “Stay focused and determined”. Commenting on what had happened she said she was convinced that his reward would be a place in paradise for himself and his relatives.

This, then is the state of the world at the present time, causing reflection on the significant prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ:-

“And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be in the days of the son of man. - - -”  
(Luke 17:26)

**NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS FOR MARCH 2006**

Hamburg, NEW YORK, Corner Southwestern Blvd. & Pleasant Avenue.

Sunday: Breaking of Bread 11:30am

Sunday Afternoon Class: 1:45pm

Midweek Bible Class: Forestville, Hamburg & Fredonia

Every Third Week: Revelation Study

The monthly advertising continues to the general public. The response in small but encouraging.

We are grateful for the counsel and help from our brethren and sisters in Manchester in the work of His house.

Minds and prayers are made on behalf of those who are coping with the ages over three score and ten.

J.A.DeF.

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.00 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 2.00 p.m.

What a blessing it is to have counsel for the work from our Brethren across the seas. Also to know we have their prayers on our behalf in our needs.

Such fellowship is our Heavenly Father's good provision which we desire to acknowledge with gratitude.