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in opposition to the Dogmas of
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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

"BLESSED ARE THE EYES"

We have recently read Jesus' words to His disciples when they came back from preaching the gospel. They rejoiced that

"... even the devils are subject unto us through thy name."
Luke 10:17.

Jesus replied:

"Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

... Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."
Luke 10:20,23-24.

What did they see and hear as they went about preaching the word of God? They were able to heal the sick through the power of God. As they did so, they taught that:

"... The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."
Luke 10:9.

The power of God enabled them to do miracles, as they witnessed regarding the kingdom of God. Jesus reminded them of their blessing in being able to see and hear those things which many prophets and kings had desired to see and hear - that the purpose of God was come nigh. They had a knowledge of God's plan for four thousand years, since God's creation; they knew of a thread of His purpose from the time of Adam and Eve. Today is nearly two thousand years since the time that Jesus spoke to His disciples. There are today even greater signs that God's purpose is nigh, when Jesus is to return to judge those who are responsible, due to their knowledge of that purpose.

How blessed we are, Brethren and Sisters, that we can look back to the time of the creation and all the circumstances over almost six thousand years, knowing that the time we long for is nigh. We find the infallible word of God in the scriptures right from

the beginning - a power to encourage, to inform, to value, to rejoice and to direct us in all our living.

With this in mind, let us go back to the beginning and trace His plan, that thread of truth working through the centuries. We know the circumstances. We have embraced His word, and hope for His promise of eternal life, if we are found worthy at the judgment seat of Jesus Christ. Our earnest prayer and hope is to hear the words of Jesus to those on His right hand:

"... Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."
Matthew 25:34.

Let us find help to increase our faith, in trust and determination to grow closer to God and His purpose.

Paul wrote to his Hebrew brethren of those faithful believers in God's plan, from the time of Adam. He defines faith:

"Now faith is the substance (assurance) of things hoped for, the evidence (proof) of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report."
Hebrews 11:1-2.

The faith of those will be the basis of a good report, a means of approval at the time of their judgment.

Abel was the first instance of faith spoken of by Paul:

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh."
Hebrews 11:4.

How can Abel speak, being dead? His faithful report is recorded in God's word, that it might be an inspiration to offer an acceptable sacrifice to God. What is an acceptable sacrifice? It involves a living in accordance with God's word, pleasing to Him. Paul wrote:

"I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."
Romans 12:1.

Enoch is mentioned that by faith, he pleased God. How did he do so?

"... Enoch walked with God ..."

Genesis 5:24.

One cannot look upon God, but Enoch walked in accordance with God's word, His commandments, and obeyed Him rather than self.

Noah is another example of faith:

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet moved with fear (Godly fear), prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

Hebrews 11:7.

Noah spent 120 years building the ark, ridiculed by the rest of the world for building a boat on dry land. In faith, he believed God's warning of a flood. Only eight people had sufficient trust in God's word. Noah condemned the world by his faithfulness in building the ark according to God's plan, in spite of the rest of the world's scoffing against his faith.

Next, Paul wrote concerning Abraham:

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out (of Ur) into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went."

Hebrews 11:8.

Also, regarding Abraham:

"By faith he dwelt in tabernacles (tents), having no possession in the land."

Verse 9.

"By faith, "... he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Verse 10.

Abraham's faith enabled him to trust in God's word; and, God made a covenant that Abraham would possess a country. When God commanded Abraham to offer up his only son Isaac, he went, believing that God would provide a lamb instead of Isaac. How hard all this was for Abraham and for Sarah his wife! Yet faith and trust enabled him to please God. We also read of Isaac and Jacob,

Abraham's seed, who by faith endured their time of probation, looking toward the fulfillment of God's promises.

Through the years, there were other faithful men, subject to God. Joseph was one who, by faith in God's word of a promised land, gave commandment when he died in Egypt, that his bones should be carried into the land promised. At the time of Joshua, Joseph's bones were taken to the land of Israel.

The golden thread of truth and faith continued during the time of Moses, as he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God." Through faith he kept the Passover and crossed the Red Sea, when God parted the waters to protect Israel from the army of Pharaoh.

There were others whom God blessed for their faithful obedience and trust in His word: Joshua, Rahab, Gedeon, Barak, Samson, Jephthae, David, Samuel, and the prophets. Paul reminds us, as we read of those men and women of faith:

"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

Hebrews 11:39-40.

Going back to Jesus' words to His disciples, we can see why Jesus said:

"... Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."
Luke 10:23-24.

For four thousand years, God's hand was with those who in faith had served Him, who looked to the end of God's purpose with hope and yet with fear - a fear lest they be turned away when Jesus comes to judge those who have known His purpose. Jesus' apostles and disciples had the blessing of God's mercy, seen in the provision of Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman, who would bruise the serpent's head.

John, one of Jesus' apostles, wrote some 90 years after Jesus' death:

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full."
I John 1:1-4.

The apostles saw and heard Jesus after His resurrection

"Then... came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.
And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord."
John 20:19-20.

Forty days later, Jesus ascended to His Father. The apostles saw Him:

"And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."
Acts 1:10-11.

Today, Brethren and Sisters, almost 2000 years later, we are greatly blessed to be shown God's purpose with this earth, as Jesus said to His disciples:

"... Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see:"
Luke 10:23.

We have not seen Jesus, have not touched His hands or His side, but we do know by faith the "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" - revealed by God's word from the beginning of His creation.

John, the apostle greatly loved by Jesus, wrote:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with

God, and the Word was God.
The same was in the beginning with God.
He came unto his own, and his own (Hebrews) received him not.
But as many as received him (through faith), to them gave he power (authority) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:
Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" John 1:1-2,11-14.

As we read His Word each day, we will grow in faith and in determination to follow the words that Jesus spoke to His disciples. "... If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." Matthew 16:24-25.

We have the record of God's word from Genesis, at the beginning of the world, to The Revelation, given to John at the end of His word.

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." Revelation 22:13-14,20-21.

The turmoil and perplexity in the world today are signs of His soon coming to establish His reign of peace on the earth. He exhorted His followers:

"... when these things begin to come to pass, then look up (Acts 1 11), and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.

J.A.DeF.

TO THIS MAN WILL I LOOK
ISAIAH 66:2

Our consideration from Isaiah is a warning to Israel of the destruction that will come upon the disobedient, while to the obedient is promised an inheritance of joy and peace:

"But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying" Isaiah 65:18-19.

This is a confirmation of His promises to those who walk after His word. Sadly, the history of His people has been one of rebellion against His precepts and a leaning to the thinking of man -following the ways of the flesh and not God's word.

"Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? And where is the place of my rest?"

Isaiah 66:1.

Can we picture what a magnificent image these words portray of God's power and glory, compared to the insignificance of man?

"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word." Isaiah 66:2.

Even in the midst of His own power and glory, God is drawn to the poor and humble - not the clever and sophisticated man who revels in his own accomplishments. What is even the greatest of men in the world's eyes, compared to the Lord?

The word "look" as used here means "to scan or look intensely". God does look intensely at those who are His and will grant His care and blessing as they in turn look to Him. Paul speaks of this close relationship as he wrote to the Corinthians:

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

I Corinthians 3:16-17.

Those that "look" to God are described as His temple - living stones wherein His spirit will dwell, even as the Lord Jesus taught His followers:

"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."
John 14:23.

David was a mighty king of Israel yet before the Lord he saw himself as lowly and unworthy of God's attention. What a pleasing spirit he had, for he recognized how insignificant he and all mankind were before Him.

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;
What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?"
Psalm 8:3-4.

God made man in his image and gave him a responsibility to care for the earth and all in it and to walk before his Maker in humility and obedience. Paul drew upon these same words of David as he wrote to the Hebrews:

"But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands.

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

Hebrews 2:6-7,9-10.

The ultimate man the Messiah, was promised to those of Isaiah's day as the only means of salvation through belief on Him. This is the man who God looks to - He who recognizes he is subject to death because of sin, yet knows there is a means of escape through a poor and contrite spirit and who in obedience walks after His Son's example.

Paul in quoting David's words makes clear the Lord Jesus' nature:

"For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he

took on him the seed of Abraham.
Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.
For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Hebrews 2:16-19.

The Lord Jesus has left a pattern for those to follow who wish to please God - those who desire to be poor and contrite in heart. Only those who submit their living to His ways, can hope to in turn have His eyes upon them for good.

M.C.S.

**"- - - To stain the pride of all glory. - - -"
(Isaiah 23:9)**

The words of the prophet are emphatic:—

"The LORD of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride OF ALL GLORY---."

These modern times have seen a great increase in knowledge, and of invention. Alas, at the same time as science has abounded, appreciation and veneration of God's holy word has greatly decreased.

Recently the media has been again directing attention to the late Albert Einstein, referring to various aspects of the scientist's life, One comment was about a gift given to the scientist by Edgar Magnin; Hollywood "RABBI TO THE STARS", at a gala luncheon in Los Angeles in 1931. It was in the hands of a collector of Einstein memorabilia, but was to be put up for auction. Referring to this, the media went on to comment about other Einstein relics of letters and photographs, making the comment that:-

"Earlier this year, a letter in which the scientist branded religious beliefs as 'CHILDISH SUPERSTITIONS' sold at auction in London for £170,000, a record for an Einstein letter. Bloomsbury Auctions, in Mayfair had given it a guide price of between £6,000 and £8,000."

Here is an example of the value that society now places upon "- - - the honourable of the earth." How emphatic is Isaiah's testimony, that the Lord is to "BRING INTO CONTEMPT" those who are regarded as honourable.

A recent scientific investigation was called the "Big Bang" experiment. Three hundred feet below ground, just outside Geneva, in a 17-mile ring, two parallel beams of particles were fired off, into this ring, in opposite directions. Physicists and engineers, from eighty five countries were involved in this experiment. Magnets were used to bend these beams of atomic particles to cause them to collide. When this occurred, though the particles were very minute, it was called the "Big Bang". The scientists made the comment that they were hoping finally to learn how the universe was made!

The sub-atomic particles, called protons, travelled almost at the speed of light. These ambitious physicists hoped that it would be a mini-version of the "Big Bang" of when the universe came into being. They hope to explain how particles have mass, which enables them to join up to form stars, planets and people. That they will be able to find out about dark matter which makes up so much of the universe, and drives the motion and rotation of galaxies.

But, with this atom-smasher inside a 17-mile tunnel, what do the wise of this world, with all this effort and expense, hope to achieve? All those years ago, the Eternal Spirit of the High Heavens, placed on record through His prophet, His sombre warning:-

"The Lord of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory."
(Isaiah 23:9)

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth."
(Isaiah 24:21)

"Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."
(Isaiah 24:23)

The truth concerning God's creation is preserved in His holy word! It is all we are required, or need to know, and is in the book of Genesis! !

A BIBLE CLASS

"HE ... PREACHED UNTO THE SPIRITS IN PRISON"

I Peter 3:19

Prisoners are those who have been convicted of a broken law and are sentenced to a period of time in a prison cell. Paul and Silas were two who were so sentenced for teaching the word of God:

"... they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks"

Acts 16:23-24.

There was a great earthquake that freed Paul and Silas. The jailor, frightened by the earthquake, asked Paul and Silas:

"... Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

Acts 16:30.

Paul and Silas responded by preaching:

"... Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

Acts 16:31-32,34.

Paul and Silas preached to the jailor who sought to be saved. He and his house responded to God's word and were baptized into the hope of eternal life. Many who believed in God and His Son suffered imprisonment. Paul wrote concerning their faith:

"... others had trial of cruel mockings, and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment."

Hebrews 11:36.

Jesus, shortly after his baptism:

"... went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,
To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4:16-19.

Jesus so spoke, fulfilling God's promises to His people.

Isaiah had prophesied of the work of Jesus:

"I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."
Isaiah 42:6-7.

Jesus did open blind eyes, brought out prisoners, provided the light of the truth in the darkness of the prison, and healed the sick through the power of God. He did more than those miracles, as He provided freedom from the law of sin and death by His own death on the cross. He is the "... Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" - spoken of by John the Baptist in John 1:29.

Sin came into the world when Adam and Eve were seduced by the serpent to partake of the forbidden tree in the garden of Eden. As a result, all men have become dying creatures. Paul wrote to his Roman brethren:

"Wherefore, as by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:
(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.
Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, ...
Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound.
But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord"
Romans 5:12-14,20-21.

God's grace has been provided through the victory of Jesus Christ as He died in obedience to His Father's purpose. Paul wrote further, revealing this grace of God:

"... God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.
Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.
But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.
For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Romans 6:17-18,22-23.

By His death on the cross, Jesus has made possible a freedom from the law of sin, which inevitably results in death; but life is granted by forgiveness - the grace of God.

With these thoughts, let us go back to Peter's words:

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened (made alive) by the spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;"
I Peter 3:18-19.

Without the grace of God, provided through Jesus' death, who was without sin, there would be no freedom from the law of sin and death, which sentences us to be prisoners. How blessed we are that He has preached to us, freeing us from the darkness of imprisonment, giving us the hope of eternal life when Jesus returns to judge us according to our works.

J.A.DeF.

JEHOVAH SAVES

There is no other event of importance, short of Christ's death and victory over His flesh, than His birth. From our daily readings in Luke, we are reminded again of some of these events to keep us focused in our walk of faith.

"And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb." Luke 2:21.

His name was given to Mary by an angel before His conception. The angel came with the news that because of her faithfulness, Mary had been chosen by the Almighty to be the mother of the coming Messiah. She was espoused to Joseph, but as yet unmarried and pondered how she could bear a child, being a virgin:

"And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1:30-33.

These words must have been overwhelming to Mary, yet she accepted this news with remarkable composure - a testament of her faith, seeing she had just been told she was to become the mother of the Messiah all Israel had long awaited:

"And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her." Luke 1:38.

His name was foreordained as "Jesus", meaning, "Jehovah Saves" - the Messiah promised. Likewise was this news told later to the shepherds who were led to His birthplace in the stable at Bethlehem:

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:8-11.

The similar account in Matthew of His birth records the Spirit's message to Joseph who was espoused to Mary:

"... the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shall call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."

Matthew 1:20-21.

These events reveal the faithfulness of both Mary and Joseph who trusted in God's Word and followed His instructions without question. As believing Jews, they looked for the coming of the Messiah as taught by both the law and the prophets. How filled with awe they would be to realize this blessing was to be granted to them alone of all the young men and women of Israel:

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Imanuel." Isaiah 7:14.

Isaiah's prophecy of the Messiah goes on to teach of what this Son of God will become at the end of God's purpose and of His government of peace and prosperity which will encompass the entire world:

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." Isaiah 9:6-7.

The word "zeal" as used here means, "to be jealous with a fervor or intense ardor". It has been God's fervent desire to call out a people to serve Him and that they should walk before Him in righteousness.

Paul writes to his brethren in Phillipians teaching of the nature of Jesus the Messiah. Although the Son of God, He was born of a woman - the seed of Abraham and thus an inheritor of our carnal nature:

"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Philippians 2:7-11.

Being the Son Of God, Jesus was given God's grace, yet took upon Himself the nature of man - sinful flesh, and had to struggle to overcome it, as all his brethren before and after Him have attempted to do. We can understand why Paul said, "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" for He is indeed the Savior appointed of God to rule the world in righteousness at His return - the only man to overcome his flesh nature perfectly without sin.

In the record of Acts, Peter preached boldly to the men of Israel, teaching of the man Jesus, the Messiah and of the power which His name provides:

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12.

Some may say, "what's in a name?" To us, the name Jesus Christ is the only hope of resurrection from the grave, the only hope of a life in His kingdom to be established at His return. To those who believe in God's word through His Son - His name is everything precious, the only means of life eternal.

As we review each year in our daily readings the record of His birth, we rejoice in the mercy of God who provided His Son, and in the faithfulness and obedience of Jesus Christ our Covering - the only name by which we may approach unto God.

M.C.S.

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

"For men shall be lovers of their own selves - - -
blasphemers - - - disobedient to parents - - - unholy."
(2 Timothy 3:2)

Prophesying of a coming of great deterioration in human behaviour, the Apostle warned:—

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse,
deceiving and being deceived." (2 Timothy 3:13)

Recent media reports come as a shock. A few years ago, the youth, to a degree, were submissive.

Consider some of the recent reports:-

"- - - figures revealed that soaring numbers of weapons are being smuggled into schools. - - - (A government spokesperson admitted) - - - too many people did not feel safe from violence on Britain's streets or even in their own homes."

Official statistics revealed a 700 per cent increase in these years, of knives discovered in schools. Some new jails have been opened. Statistics show an increase in prison places, but note the comment:-

"- - - non-custodial sentences for knife crime WAS BEING FORCED BY OVER-CROWDING."

Even as prison places are increased, so does bad behaviour grow. Deterioration is described in the following news comments:-

"The prison system has repeatedly reached bursting point, with early-release schemes introduced to ease the strain."
"Fewer than one in five offenders - - - just seventeen per cent was given a custodial sentence - - -. Many have just been given suspended sentences or community punishments. - - -"

"The number of people hospitalised during violent attacks have soared by almost thirty per cent in four years."

What is so striking is that younger children are becoming involved in the bad behaviour. Details from the media do give cause for thought:-

"Statistics over the recent spate of knife murders show one in sixteen youths aged fourteen to seventeen is armed.

- - - younger children are becoming involved in knife crime.

- - - A separate study shows that eight per cent of eight-year olds who are guilty of anti-social behaviour, are carrying a weapon in case they get into a fight."

A common weapon is a "flick knife", but twelve per cent carried a kitchen knife! Just think how readily available they are! !

In a Crime and Justice Survey, when many children and young adults were questioned, it was found that twenty-two per cent had been involved in crime in the previous twelve months, while six per cent of these were serial offenders, committing at least six offences in a year. Of these, one in ten was guilty of serious behaviour, including burglary, robbery, assault and selling drugs.

Police who were attacked by a mob had asked a 15 year old girl to pick up litter she had dropped in the street. Being unarmed, they feared for their lives as they were swamped by 30 thugs. Superior officers said of them, that "both were distraught after the incident, and have been allowed sick leave." The Superior also added, "They did not want her to be arrested, so they were trying to prevent us detaining her. She was never going to be arrested, but it is a fact THERE IS NO RESPECT. I seriously think the parents of this child should be fined. We have to put out some sort of message and the only way is to get parents to take responsibility for their children."

"It amazes you, it actually depresses you, the state of children today. The disrespect, not only for people who might be in the police, but anyone older, I find it amazing someone could bite another human being like that."

"They were acting like animals, but I hate using the term 'animals' because they would not do that. Animals have a reason for doing something. This is just nonsense violence."

The Authorities believe five young women were involved at the start of the incident, but then were joined by men and also by some older women.

Such information from the media, about this deterioration in human affairs, brings to attention how meaningful is scriptural prophecy about this present time. But with this deterioration comes scriptural hope; through the Apostle Paul comes divine assurance that there is to be a heavenly solution:-

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The LORD knoweth them that are his."
(2 Timothy 2:19)

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS FOR JANUARY 2009

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

Sunday: Breaking of Bread 11:30 am

Sunday Afternoon Class: 1:45 pm

Midweek Bible Class: Forestville, Hamburg & Fredonia

Every Third Week: Revelation Study

World-wide financial problems bring fear of a serious recession. Unemployment increase adds to the perplexity of how it can be relieved. Will the New Year bring about God's plan for this earth?

After solving a problem with the postal service, our monthly mailing of invitations for literature has been resumed.

J.A.DeF.

MANCHESTER

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.00 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 2.00 p.m.

As we come to a new year, once again we are enabled to continue this publication.

It is of our Heavenly Father that we have such provision.

How wonderfully gracious He is, to so provide, as we seek to hold fast to His revealed word.