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A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

and a warning against the deception in the last days
foretold by Christ

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AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

MOUNT MORIAH

In our recent readings, we are shown the mind of David when he was king over Israel. He was a man after God's own heart, but he did fail as a man of flesh in the matter of numbering Israel, recorded as a warning for us. God spoke to David:

"... again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah."
II Samuel 24:1.

The record in Chronicles gives us further knowledge of David's mind:

"And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel."
I Chronicles 21:1.

Satan - sin in the flesh - moved David to quickly arrange to number Israel, as his fleshly thinking was stirred up to know the power in numbers. God's anger against Israel was His reason to number Israel, not David's pleasure in his own power according to the numbers under his reign.

Joab warned David when the king told him to count Israel:

"... why doth my lord the king delight in this thing?"
II Samuel 24:3.

Delight is to take pleasure, be pleased. God was not pleased with Israel when He told David to number Israel; David should not have delighted in numbering his people. His mind is expressed in the Psalm, as he wrote:

"There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength." Psalm 33:16.

David ordered Joab to: "Go, number Israel and Judah." But when he considered his command, aware of his inward delight, as well as God's anger kindled against Israel:

"David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly."
II Samuel 24:10.

The Almighty responded through Gad, David's seer, by giving David three things to choose: famine, fleeing from his enemies for three months, or three days' pestilence. David, submitting to God, told the seer:

"... I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD, for his mercies are great and let me not fall into the hand of man." II Samuel 24:14.

The Almighty sent a pestilence upon Israel - and there died seventy thousand of Israel. Thus God caused a pestilence upon those in Israel with whom He was angry. However, God did show His mercy:

"... when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thy hand. And the angel was by the threshing - place of Araunah the Jebusite." II Samuel 24:16.

David was by the threshingplace, and spoke unto the LORD, when he saw the angel that smote the people:

"... Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house." II Samuel 24:17.

The Almighty replied through Gad the seer, that David should build an altar and offer sacrifices at his own cost:

"... David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel." II Samuel 24:25.

God in His mercy knew when it was enough, and ceased the pestilence; but only after seventy thousand died because of His anger. He also forgave David, who acknowledged his failure and offered sacrifices on the threshingfloor of Araunah in Jerusalem. We read further of that threshingfloor when Solomon began to build the temple of the LORD:

"Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David, his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Oman (Araunah) the Jebusite."

II Chronicles 3:1.

How fitting it was that the house of God was to be built upon Mount Moriah! The name Moriah is made up of two words: (1) to see, and (2) Yahweh - seen of God. God's presence was there as Solomon built the house of God.

There is another place where God saw Mount Moriah, during Abraham's time, long before the lives of David and Solomon. We read of God's hand upon Abraham:

"... it came to pass after these things (God's work with Abraham), that God did tempt (test, prove) Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham, and he said. Behold, here I am. And he said Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." Genesis 22:1-2.

Isaac was Abraham's seed - his only son - who would be able to bring about the covenant of God with Abraham:

"... I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name (Abraham - father of many nations) great; and thou shalt be a blessing:
And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Genesis 12:2-3.

God further promised Abraham:

"... in Isaac shall thy seed be called." Genesis 21:12.

It was a great test of Abraham to sacrifice Isaac, for, in so doing, there would be no seed of Abraham! It was a great and faithful effort as Abraham took the wood and the fire, and came to Mount Moriah. As they approached, Isaac asked his father:

"... Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

And they came to the place which God had told him of, and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son." Genesis 22:7-10.

What tremendous faith Abraham revealed, as he was ready to use the knife. He knew God would not fail to keep His covenant with Abraham. God did indeed test Abraham's faith!

We read in Paul's writing:

"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead: from whence also he received him in a figure."

Hebrews 11:17-19.

The angel of God said:

"... Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me"

Genesis 22:12.

In place of Isaac, God provided a ram caught in a thicket, and Abraham offered it for a burnt offering in the stead of his son:

"And Abraham called the name of the place Tehovah-Tireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen."

Genesis 22:14.

Tehovah-Tireh is made up of two words: (1) Jehovah – the LORD; and (2) Jireh - will see. God did see!

Moriah - seen of God. Jehovah-Jireh - God will see. God has looked down upon His people, knowing their hearts, trying their faith, rewarding their obedience, and punishing their disobedience. He has looked down from the time of Adam and Eve when He saw disobedience; and, as a result, all men are sentenced to die. A few have been faithful. To these He promises the hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ. The majority of men die, without hope.

As we look at the history of Israel from Abraham, to David, to Solomon - we see His hand. By the end of Solomon's reign, his heart had turned away from God:

"... he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice,

And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded."

I Kings 11:3,9-10.

The Almighty looked down upon Israel, upon Solomon, and upon Rehoboam his son, and was sorely displeased with their disobedience to His commandments. Because of Rehoboam's disobedience, Israel was divided into ten tribes in Samaria and two tribes in Judah. The ten tribes continued to displease God, and were dispersed in 721 BC. The two tribes of Judah were also taken into captivity by Babylon in 588 BC, as the Almighty had warned through His prophets. The temple built by Solomon was destroyed, and Jerusalem was burned by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. Thus ended Israel as a nation, until it was restored in 1948 AD. Today it is threatened by the Palestinians, who are determined to conquer it.

The place of Solomon's temple, and later Herod's temple, is the site of the Mohammedan Dome of the Rock. All that remains of the temple is the Wailing Wall, the place where Hebrews call upon God.

We know that Israel will be established again as God's kingdom, when the Lord Jesus returns to accomplish His Father's purpose, as God promised through Isaiah:

"... it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house (Mount Moriah) 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.

O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD." Isaiah 2:2-3,5.

This is our hope, brethren and sisters, to be among those chosen to be His people for eternity:

"Then shall the King (Jesus) say unto them 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.

God has looked down from heaven since the time of Adam, seeking those who strive to walk in the light, as John wrote:

"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

I John 1:5-7.

J.A.DeF.

A BIBLE CLASS

"A Fool Uttereth All His Mind"
Proverbs 29:11

Through Solomon's wisdom in the Proverbs, he often made a comparison between the mind of flesh and spirit and those either foolish or wise in the Spirit's eyes. Our verse under consideration is one of these illustrations:

"A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards." Proverbs 29:11.

The word "fool" can have a variety of applications, but generally means, to be self-confident and going beyond the limits. Solomon's words teach of the need for discretion in one's living, and the use of restraint instead of going beyond what is necessary and right.

A wise man chooses his words carefully and uses them with caution and restraint, while the fool blurts out this first thing that comes into his mind, giving little heed to their consequences. The fool hasn't learned the need for discretion or to simply say nothing when confronted.

Paul in writing to his brother Titus, encourages him to guide all those under his stewardship in the gentle ways of the Spirit, that they may grow in God's wisdom, saying:

"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.

For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared." Titus 3:1-4.

The ability to speak softly, especially if anger is provoked, is to apply God's wisdom in one's living with power:

"By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone."
Proverbs 25:15.

The fool does not heed God's word and counsel and depends instead on his own thinking, faulty and flesh oriented as it may be:

"The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise."
Proverbs 12:15.

The fool does not see his own faults for his eyes are not grounded by the spirit's wisdom:

"Wise men lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction."
Proverbs 10:14.

From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks, and if it is not circumcised with the fleshly characteristics cut off, it will speak in the same manner - without restraint or wisdom:

"A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident."
Proverbs 14:16.

If Cain had been wise he would have listened and accepted God's correction. Instead he let his flesh dominate his thinking, and without restraint his jealousy and anger grew into rage and murder, killing his brother Abel.

Solomon likewise speaks of the need for control as he wrote:

"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.
Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon the earth: therefore let thy words be few."
Eccl. 5:1-2.

God knows our hearts and knows our words before we give them utterance. Are we looking to His wisdom to guide our thinking and speech, or are we walking after our own fleshly thinking?

Jacob who endeavored to walk in God's wisdom was touched on his thigh, while he wrestled with a messenger sent from God!

"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him unto the breaking of the day.

And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."
Genesis 32:24-26,28.

Jacob knew God's wisdom and struggled to keep it. Because he persevered, his name was changed to Israel - a prince with God. Yet he limped the rest of his days, where the hollow of his thigh was touched - the weakness being a constant reminder of his own fleshly state and the need to lean on God and His wisdom.

We may all act foolishly at times, and not apply God's wisdom in our living, as we should. When this happens, we are reminded by David of God's saving grace, which can redeem us from our error:

"Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.

Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat; and they draw near unto the gates of death.

Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.

He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions."
Psalm 107:17-20.

M.C.S.

KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED.

(Daniel 12:4)

Recent years have seen a great increase in knowledge and inventiveness at a time when "many shall run to and fro".

But the intricacies of life do not bring happiness. The Apostle Paul, speaking of mans' failures in many ways refers to their great lack in being "inventors of evil things." (Romans 1:30). What a surge of cleverness there has been in the twentieth century. A recent media article announced:

"Micro soft bug that steals your bank and credit card details."

A "micro soft bug" is a very clever invention. It is reported that MILLIONS OF COMPUTER USERS are under threat from this skilfully produced object. Even the report about it is intricate as follows:-

"Millions of computer users have been warned not to use Microsofts Internet Explorer amid fears it has been hijacked with a virus by hackers.

The bug allows hackers to take over any computer running the company's browser; the world's most popular used by eighty per cent of all Internet accounts.

They can then steal passwords and credit card information, experts said. - - -

More than ten thousand websites and TWO MILLION COMPUTERS have already been compromised. - - -

according to the antivirus maker. - - -

Computers can be infected when users visit a legitimate website - - - compromised with a small piece of code that invisibly redirects 'the browser' to an 'infected site' - - -

allowing criminals to do anything from stealing passport details to using the machine to send out 'SPAM E MAILS'

- - -. Microsoft said that it had detected attacks on machines using Internet Explorer 7, the most widely-used version of the 'browser', but that other versions ARE POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE".

Those who lament this growing degree of financial insecurity

have gone on to say, "We are actively investigating the vulnerability that these dishonest endeavours are attempting to exploit, and we will continue to monitor this threat."

But looking now in another direction, mans' cleverness was greatly revealed in a very costly experiment referred to as studying "particle physics". The question is asked, "why do particles have mass, which enables them to join up and form stars, planets and people". Apparatus has been worked at costing £3.5 billion pounds to which sum Britain has contributed £500 million. It is called the Large Hadron Collider, it is a large atom-smasher inside a 17-mile tunnel near Geneva. It has been used to attempt to recreate conditions said to have existed fractions of a second after what is referred to as the "Big Bang" when there was a creative explosion which resulted in Sun, Moon, Stars, and this Good Earth. Science has made a boast that it is;-

"- - - the most complex machine ever built — sending sub-atomic particles around the tunnel at the velocity of the speed of light - - - and when activated it was a scientific success. - - -"

So at this time of greatly increased knowledge, there is a boastful trend in mans' thinking. But in such a world of cleverness there is also a threat in mans' behaviour, which, for example, is why Western Nations attacked Iraq, out of fear that the regime there had to be dealt with because of a possibility that Iraq might develop nuclear explosive devices. So the world remains an unhappy place, with a general deterioration in tranquillity, which to a degree, followed the Second World War.

For all the learning, and the advance of science, the wisdom which is from heaven is neglected and even spurned, and so has come to pass that which the Apostle warned against; -

"For a time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears:
And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."
(2 Timothy 4:3-4)

THE COMING OF THE LORD DRAWETH NIGH

In our recent daily readings from Luke, the Lord Jesus speaks to His disciples of the coming destruction of the temple after some had praised its beauty:

"As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Luke 21:6.

We know from history that the temple rebuilt by Herod would be destroyed some thirty-seven years later by the Romans under the leadership of Titus. No doubt alarmed to hear of this prophecy, the disciples asked:

"... Master, but when shall these things be? And what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?" Luke 21:7.

The Lord Jesus gave no specifics of the time of this destruction, just as no specifics are left to us of the exact time of His return as is recorded by Matthew:

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.
But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Matthew 24:35-36.

The Lord Jesus did not know when He would return, but knew that the work set before Him would require suffering and His death, before His Father's will could be accomplished. He compared the time of His return as like the days of Noah:

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.
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 24:37-39.

There was neither specific time nor date revealed, but rather that His disciples and followers should keep their eyes focused in faith doing His will - not knowing when His return would occur.

Answering the disciples' question when He would return, He told them of the state of the world at that time, There would be wars, earthquakes, famines, pestilences and fearful sights and great signs from heaven evident. But before this time came to pass, they too would know persecution from those who endeavored to stamp out their ministry of His word:

"But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony."

Luke 21:12-13.

During this time of adversity for being His followers, He implored them not to waver in faith for, "in your patience possess ye your souls".

There have passed many hundreds of years since these words were spoken by Jesus to His disciples, and still His followers wait for His coming. Paul too encouraged those in his time of the need for patience, as they waited for the Lord's coming:

"For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

Hebrews 10:36-39.

Paul here was exhorting his Hebrew brethren, who had accepted Christ, to persevere in patience during the time of their probation and thus reveal a faith pleasing to the Father, as they waited for the Lord Jesus' return.

When He does return, there will be only a few living and walking in faith the vast majority of believers will have died through the ages and will be waiting in the grave for His call to resurrection. So many now dead, have witnessed tumult in the world and may have thought His return to be imminent while they were alive.

Yet it makes no difference to their outcome, for it is the working out of their salvation during their time of probation that is important.

Many hundreds of years have passed since His death and resurrection and yet we have not witnessed His return, but we believe, as did Paul, that we must wait in patience, walking in faith until that time comes. During our time of probation we are helped in our struggle to walk in faith while fighting against our own fleshly tendencies, by the Lord Jesus, who makes intercession to God for us as our High Priest and Mediator:

"But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."
Romans 8:25-28.

As our Mediator and High Priest, the Lord Jesus sits at His Father's right hand, presenting our prayers, pleading on our behalf, for He knows what we are going through, having suffered in the flesh Himself.

James also speaks of the need for patience before the Lord's return, saying:

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."
James 5:7-8.

We know not when He will return - whether it be during our lifetime, or after our death. Therefore, how vital it is that our hearts

be established in faith, walking after His precepts and waiting in patience as does the husbandman who plants, waters and nurtures his crop and waits for the harvest.

"Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience." James 5:10.

Reading the record of those of old who endured hardship but persevered on in patience and hope helps us. They are an encouragement to us, as we look for the same hope to be accomplished, we too must push on in faith.

Job, a servant of the Lord, was known for his patience under trial and summed up his test of faith by saying:

"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.

Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Job 42:5-6.

We too must spend our sojourn abhorring our flesh and seeking repentance for our failing natures, just as Job's example teaches.

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Romans 15:4.

As we struggle to overcome, we can glorify the Father through our efforts to restrain our flesh nature by nurturing patience and faithfulness to His word in our every thought and deed.

M.C.S.

A BIBLE CLASS

"JOSHUA WAS CLOTHED WITH
FILTHY GARMENTS"
Zechariah 3:3

Let us look at Israel's circumstances when these words were written. Israel's captivity in Babylon ended after seventy years:

"... the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,
Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth: and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem which is in Judah"
Ezra 1:1-2.

About fifty thousand of Israel, under the leadership of Jeshua the high priest, and Zerubbabel the governor, began building the temple in Jerusalem, with the hand of God in that work.

There were adversaries in the land who caused the work of building the temple to cease. The work stopped for fourteen years, until Darius the king found Cyrus' proclamation, that Israel should build the temple in Jerusalem. God sent Jeshua and Zerubbabel to encourage the continuance of the work:

"Then the prophets. Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them."
Ezra 5:1.

"And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes the king of Persia."
Ezra 6:14.

Haggai the prophet stirred up the Jews during the time when the building had ceased, saying:

"... This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD'S house should be built.
Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you. O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste?
Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways."
Haggai 1:2-5.

The Jews did consider their ways, and they responded:

"... the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel... and the spirit of Joshua (Jeshua)... the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God." Haggai 1:14.

The Almighty also sent Zechariah to stir up the people to resume the building of the temple in Jerusalem. Zechariah spoke to those who ceased to build:

"The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers. ... Thus saith the LORD of hosts,... Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you.

Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from you evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the LORD. Your fathers, where are they? ..." Zechariah 1:2-5.

Again God required his people to "Consider your ways." They did, and proceeded to finish the building of His house. Zechariah saw a vision:

"And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan (an adversary) standing at his right hand to resist him. Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel." Zechariah 3:1,3.

Joshua the high priest, should have been clothed with the garments of the high priest, but rather, he had filthy clothing. Obviously he was not doing the work of the high priest, in seeking God's help for the Jews for deliverance from their adversaries. In the vision God directed:

"... Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by." Zechariah 3:4-5.

The mitre was to be upon the head of the high priest, as commanded by God to Moses on Mount Sinai:

"... thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod:

And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre." Exodus 29:5-6.

God further had instructed concerning the "holy crown":

"... thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be.

And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD." Exodus 28:36-38.

The angel in Zechariah's vision further spoke;

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by" Zechariah 3:7.

As the Jews in Jerusalem considered their ways, and listened to God's word, the house of God was finished:

"... they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded it, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia." Ezra 6:14.

It is a lesson for ourselves today! Let us consider our ways, putting our hearts (as the Hebrew word for "consider" means) into the edifying of His house.

J.A.DeF.

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

"- - - Shall turn away their ears from the Truth. - - -"

The Apostle Paul prophesied of a coming great disbelief. In writing to Timothy he said:-

"- - - the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.- - -" (2 Timothy 4:3)

In another of his epistles he declared:-

"- - - Thank we God without ceasing, because when ye

received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

(1 Thess. 2:13)

Again in another place Paul wrote of the:-

"- - - fellowship of the mystery, WHICH FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD HATH BEEN HID IN GOD, who created all things by (OR FOR) Jesus Christ:"

(Ephesians 3:9)

We ask, where is "sound doctrine" today? Respect for the Almighty's holy word has been lost through respect for science, whose writings are the word of men, Paul spoke of "the beginning" and the details concerning the beginning of all that we see around, is preserved in God's holy word, that we may know the Truth. Note a recent media report under the heading:-

"SCIENTISTS FIND ONE THOUSAND NEW SPECIES.

One of the World's biggest former battlegrounds has been revealed as a treasure-trove of rare wildlife.

The Greater Mekong region of South-east Asia yielded one thousand and sixty eight species new to science in the past decade. Among the discoveries are the world's biggest huntsman spider, a dragon millipede that produces deadly cyanide and a rock rat PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT TO HAVE DIED OUT ELEVEN MILLION YEARS AGO. Discoveries include plants fish, frogs, spiders, lizards, snakes and mammals. Notable new species include the blue spotted tree frog, and the rare woolly bat, found in forests across the area. Most of the species were found in unexplored jungles and wetlands which escaped the worst of the fighting."

A scientist was quoted as saying, "This region is like those I read about as a child in the stories of Charles Darwin."

Here then is the testimony of science, which talks of eleven million years ago, and of certain forms of life that died out at that time. And we also have the Bible, that tells us of what really happened, which resulted in the wonders of life seen all around us in this good earth. God's word gives to us the profound simplicity of Truth: —

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

And God called the light DAY, and the darkness He called NIGHT. And the evening and the morning WERE THE FIRST DAY." (Genesis chapter 1)

This account then goes on to describe how The Eternal formed all that we now see around us, during a period of six days. And it was on the fifth day that:-

"God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl, that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good."

Then came that culminating work on the sixth day:-

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind. - - -

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. And God blessed them and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

(Genesis 1:24-28)

So came living creatures and man, and ultimately Jesus Christ, of whom Paul said, in his epistle to the Ephesians, was a great focus :-

" - - - the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ."

This is the simple Truth. The complexities of science was recently revealed in a reference concerning the United States Postal Service:-

"In 1970, the U.S. Postal Service was forced to apologise for calling an APATOSAURUS a BRONTOSAURUS on a series of DINOSAUR stamps."

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS FOR MARCH 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

The economy of the United States as well as much of the world, continues to grow worse, resulting in many people being without work.

The turbulence between Hamas and Israel brings fear and deep concern.

All these signs reveal that the coming of Jesus Christ is closing in, making us, "look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

Response to our monthly mailing continues to bring interest from a few and encouragement to us as well.

J.A.DeF.

MANCHESTER

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.00 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 2.00 p.m.

The days go by and spring approaches. Soon there will be a revival of growing things from the ground. This is all part of the unending continuance of the work of the Supreme Heavenly Being. In the goodness of God, in this last time, we can look at this Springtime and then on to that unending promised resurrection from the dead, when we hope again to see those dear Ones we were so close to in our past. How gracious is our Heavenly Father that we can have such wonderful hope.