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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

RELY UPON THE LORD

In our readings, we sometimes find a word or a situation which stands out, to encourage us in our efforts to glorify God. In Chronicles, the word “rely” comes to mind as we perceive the help granted to the people of God almost 3,000 years ago. In times of trouble, they were greatly strengthened as they relied upon the Lord. Rely means to lean upon, rest upon, to stay, to support self. Let us look at some of the examples of those who did rely upon the Lord.

Abijah, the son of Rehoboam, became king of Judah:

“... in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah.

... And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.

And Abijah set the battle in array with an army of valiant men of war, even four hundred thousand chosen men: Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men, being mighty men of valour.”

II Chronicles 13:1-3.

Abijah’s army was outnumbered by a ratio of two to one. But he spoke against Jeroboam, reminding him that he and the ten tribes had forsaken God:

“... we keep the charge of the LORD our God; but ye have forsaken him.

And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel (10 tribes), fight ye not against the LORD God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper.

But Jeroboam caused an ambushment to come about behind them: so they were before Judah, and the ambushment was behind them.

And when Judah looked back, behold, the battle was before and behind: and they cried unto the LORD, and the priests sounded with the trumpets.

... it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam, and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.

And the children of Israel fled before Judah: and God delivered them into their hand.

Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers.”

II Chronicles 13:11-18.

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Their fathers - Adam, Abel, Seth, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, and more - all relied upon the LORD, according to His word.

Because Abijah and Judah leaned upon the Almighty, they conquered Jeroboam and Israel:

“Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah: and the LORD struck him, and he died.

But Abijah waxed mighty, and married fourteen wives, and begat twenty and two sons, and sixteen daughters.”

II Chronicles 13:20-21.

Abijah put his trust in the hand of the LORD, and prospered the rest of his life.

One of Abijah’s sons, Asa:

“... reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years.

And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God. And commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment.”

II Chronicles 14:1-2,4.

Asa, like his father, Abijah, sought the LORD’s strength; he and his people prospered, and were given ten years of peace. At the end of the ten years of peace:

“... there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah. Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah.”

II Chronicles 14:9-10.

Asa faced the army of one million Ethiopians by relying on the LORD, as did his father, Abijah:

“... Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us. O LORD our God, for we rest (rely) on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee. So the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah and the Ethiopians fled.

And Asa and the people that were with him pursued them unto Gerar: and the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves; for they were destroyed

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before the LORD, and before his host; and they carried away very much spoil." II Chronicles 14:11-13.

With God's might, the seemingly impossible power of the Ethiopians was destroyed, in response to Asa's trust and reliance upon God.

As Asa returned from the destruction of the Ethiopians, Azariah, a prophet, reminded him:

"... Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; the LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.

But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them.

Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded." II Chronicles 15:2-4,7.

The Almighty, knowing the weakness of the flesh, warned Asa to continue his reliance upon Him, for He must be sought in order to receive His help, so being rewarded as Asa had been.

In response to God's word:

"... when Asa heard these words and the prophecy of Oded the prophet,... he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the LORD, that was before the porch of the LORD.

And they entered into a covenant to seek the LORD of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul.

And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them; and the LORD gave them rest round about.

And there was no more war until the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa." II Chronicles 15:8,12,15,19.

God in His mercy granted a time of peace from the 15th year of Asa's reign (v.10) until his 35th year.

In the 36th year of his reign:

"... Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah, and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah." II Chronicles 16:1.

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After the twenty years of peace, Asa did NOT rely upon the LORD, but rather, turned to Ben-hadad king of Syria, saying;

‘There is a league between me and thee, as there was between my father, and thy father: behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.’ II Chronicles 16:3.

Asa turned away from relying upon God, and put his trust in Ben-hadad. God was testing Asa! Would he rely on Him, as he had done when the thousand thousand Ethiopians came up against him? NO! Asa relied upon the king of Syria, who was an enemy of Israel, and failed to lean upon God. The Almighty sent Hanani the seer to Asa, who said unto him:

“... Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine hand.

Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine hand.

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.”

II Chronicles 16:7-9.

Asa did not heed God’s rebuke at the hand of Hanani. but:

“... was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house; for he was in a rage with him because of this thing. And Asa oppressed some of the people the same time.”

II Chronicles 16:10.

In the 39th year of his reign, Asa was diseased in his feet, and sought not the LORD, but turned to the physicians, yet to no avail. He died in the 41st year of his reign.

Such examples of those who relied on the LORD, and continued to do so, as well as those who failed to continue their reliance, occurred about 3,000 years ago. They are a real help for us today, Brethren and Sisters. They remind us to turn to the Almighty at all times, not just in trouble, knowing that God’s eyes “run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.” Does not God know all our hearts? Do we rely on Him in our striving to glorify Him now, in our time of probation?

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God hears those who seek and desire to serve him, as Solomon wrote in the Proverbs:

“My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart.

So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean (rely) not unto thine own understanding.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil”

Proverbs 3:1-7.

Solomon sought understanding and wisdom from the LORD; God granted him these, and more. But in his old age, he departed from God, and his heart was turned away by his many wives and concubines. He had become:

“... an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.”

Ecclesiastes 4:13.

In contrast, we have the words of David - a man who was after God's own heart:

“... I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand.

Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.

Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.”

Psalms 73:23-26.

What blessing, what help, what mercy we know from our Father! He will guide us, holding us by His right hand., if we rely on Him in all our ways.

J.A.DeF.

WHERE THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS, THERE IS LIBERTY
II CORINTHIANS 3:17

In this letter to his Corinthian brethren, Paul is communicating the excellency of the gospel message - the good news of the kingdom of God through the name of Jesus Christ. Paul reminds of the privilege they knew of the fulfillment of the gospel message through the spirit of Christ:

“Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.” II Corinthians 3:3.

The members of the Corinthian body were both Jews and Gentiles, and as Paul brought the gospel message to that mixed group, it was important they understood the spirit of the law and not cling to the letter of the law from years of rote and practice. He emphasized this reminding of those still under the law, saying:

“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech:

And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished:

But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.”

II Corinthians 3:12-15

There were some during the early days of Paul’s ministry that were holding fast to the law’s precepts - unwilling to grasp the fulfillment made through Christ’s death. Paul speaks of those as having a “veil” over their heart - unwilling to see the truth. When they did perceive Christ as the fulfiller of the law, then that veil would be removed:

“Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”

II Corinthians 3:16-17

This word “liberty” means freedom, and Paul is speaking of the freedom granted through Christ from the curse of sin and death

placed on all flesh after Adam and Eve's fall in the garden. The word "Spirit" as used here, speaks of the divine spirit or God's power which guides and directs in an understanding of His word.

Paul in his letter to the Galatians writes further of liberty:

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

Galatians 5:1-4.

The doing of the law bound them, but the spirit of Christ gave release and liberty, therefore, Paul urged them not to backslide by taking up the old ways of the law. In this case, some were demanding that all new members of the body be circumcised as was required under the law. If those covered under Christ could not perceive the freedom He had provided with His death, then His sacrifice was meaningless.

"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."

Galatians 5:13.

They were now free from the restraints of the law. Yet this freedom could be stretched and misapplied to give occasion for fleshly pursuits. With liberty there was now a greater responsibility to exercise the spirit of Christ in their living, serving one another in love:

"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Galatians 5:14.

If we are covered by His death, then we are given liberty from the laws of sin and death. With that freedom, comes a duty to walk after His example in order to be known as His brethren and sisters:

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

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For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:"

Romans 6:3-4.

In Jesus' day, many of the Jews felt a false assurance of salvation just because they were the seed of Abraham. Because they did not perceive the spirit within the law, they were unprepared to receive their Messiah when He appeared before them. Jesus admonished them in this regard, saying:

"... If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

John 8:31-36.

Prophesying of the liberty which would be brought by the coming Messiah, Isaiah wrote in the spirit of Christ saying:

"The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;"

Isaiah 61:1-2.

His sacrifice and death gave release to the flesh's curse upon man for those who could perceive with the eyes of faith.

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

John 8:31-32.

M.C.S.

A BIBLE CLASS

"WHY ARE THEY THEN BAPTIZED FOR THE DEAD"
I Corinthians 15:29

This question was raised by Paul as he preached the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ to his brethren in Corinth. He preached the gospel, the mystery of godliness:

"... without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." I Timothy 3:16.

As Paul preached to his brethren, he asked some who questioned whether the Lord Jesus was raised from the dead:

"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God, that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins:

Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable (pitiable)." I Corinthians 15:12-19.

All men are sentenced to death because of Adam and Eve's disobedience in eating of the forbidden tree in the garden of Eden. Jesus was born the son of man, and also the Son of God, and therefore was sentenced to die, as are all men. However, He was the only one who never sinned; yet being flesh, even He was sentenced to die. However, He conquered his fleshly nature and fulfilled all righteousness in being baptized by John the Baptist. He was then to begin His ministry and preach the gospel for 3-1/2 years. As He died on the cross, he cried out:

"... It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the spirit."
John 19:30.

What was finished? He had spoken:

"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me: and they have kept thy word."
John 17:4-6.

Jesus rose after three days, and taught His disciples for 40 days. He then ascended to heaven, to the right hand of His Father, as a means of redemption for all those who have believed in Him, denied self; and taken up their cross and followed Him. Such will be found faithful at Jesus' judgment, and will be established as kings and priests in God's kingdom for eternity.

How can they be brought to such a position if they have died - or are subject to death? Jesus spoke to Nicodemus:

"... Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."
John 3:3-5.

How can one be born of water and of the Spirit? When one is baptized - as Jesus was by John the Baptist - he is baptized into Jesus by immersion in water, and rises from the waters of death a new man of the Spirit. Paul further helps us:

"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to (by) sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

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For if we have been planted (united) together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

Knowing this, that our old man (flesh) is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Romans 6:1-6.

By burial of baptism, the old man of sin is crucified, dead to sin, and rises from the water as the new man of Spirit.

Paul also wrote to his brethren in Colosse concerning those who are:

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Colossians 2:12-14.

Does this answer Paul's question:

"... What shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?" I Corinthians 15:29.

If Jesus had not risen from the dead, how could we be "born of water and of the Spirit" - raised up a new man, a new spirit, with the hope of hearing the words of Jesus? It is further written:

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Matthew 16:27.

How could the Lord Jesus be there in His Father's Presence, if He had not been resurrected, with the man of flesh conquered, when he cried out: "IT IS FINISHED"?

J.A.DeF.

“THERE SHALL COME IN THE LAST DAYS SCOFFERS.”

The Apostle Peter writing the above words warns of a great deterioration in faith as the years go by, in this last time. His words are:-

“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, WALKING AFTER THEIR OWN LUSTS. And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.”
2 Peter 3:3-4.

And so the warning in Biblical accounts, of incidents of the past, of those heavenly punishments that came upon those past failing generations, are ignored! As a result there is now, a very great deterioration of moral behaviour.

Because of this, oh, how sad is the situation of the present day generation, Christ, in the blessing of His counsel, gave a wonderful spiritual declaration. He declared:-

“Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: BUT FROM THE BEGINNING IT WAS NOT SO.

And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”
Matthew 19:8-9.

In the Beginning the first man was given Eve to be his wife. The Great Creator declared of Adam, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.” So Eve was formed, and from those first two has come all the generations of mankind. But what does present day so-called science say? It speaks of a vast time scale, during which there has been an evolving of what we now have. So that the blessed setting up of marriage, as a special creation, is thereby denigrated. Can we wonder then that the institution of marriage has so greatly deteriorated?

Looking at the present day media, we will quote some of the lamenting remarks recently made as follows:-

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(A politician declares) "Marriage has almost disappeared from official forms. I think that needs to change. - - - Britain's broken society (is) often rooted in lack of discipline AND FAMILY TIES. - - - the absence of secure and stable upbringing drives people to a life of - - - crime. - - - if you are brought up in a family with two married parents you are more likely than not to have a decent stable and secure upbringing and do well in life.

We should be proud of the institution of marriage. We should value it.

Figures released - - - show the average marriage now lasts just 11.7 years, with 45 per cent ending in divorce. Single parents raise nearly a quarter of children."

Further comments in context with these remarks went on to say:-

"There are marriages that work and those that do not. There are couples who choose not to marry There are single parents bringing up kids very well doing a heroic job."

Another politician said:-

"I support marriage, I am married but I do not think it is right to stigmatise other types of families."

Thus respect for the Heavenly given blessing of the institution of the wonderful bond of husband and wife, and of Christ's strongly affirmed declaration for it, loses meaning, and so comes the sadly fulfilled prophecy of diminished morality, which declares that we are now in "the last days".

THE WAY YE KNOW

In our recent readings from John, we have read of the Lord Jesus' careful preparation of His disciples to take on the work of preaching the gospel after His departure. From His words, we too can be guided, as we endeavor to witness to this same gospel.

At the time of Passover, shortly before His death, Jesus spoke to them at length of events which would come to pass in the next few days:

“Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.” John 13:1.

Supper being ended, the Lord Jesus rose from the table to leave them with a practical example of His love:

“He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.” John 13:4-5.

By doing so, He taught them of an essential truth upon which their ministry was to be based - humility of mind and spirit, to keep them in remembrance that this was not their work, but the doing of God's will:

“So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”

John 13:12-17.

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Throughout His life, He had humbled Himself before God, and through this act of washing their feet, was leaving them an example that they were to do the same. This would remind them of the danger of fleshly pride, especially since they were to be granted power in order to perform healings and miracles in His name.

It was just after this event that Judas left their gathering to betray his Master, causing Jesus to say:

“...Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”
John 13:31-35.

This was to be the basis of their discipleship - to be grounded in love one to another. They had witnessed His love for them and now must grow in that same love for each other.

“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”
John 14:21.

Their demeanor was to stand out, as did His, displaying love in a singleness of purpose to serve the Father:

“As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.”
John 15:9.

To comfort them before His departure, He said:

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so,

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I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.
And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again,
and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may
be also.

And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know."

John 14:1-4.

With these words He emphasized the hope he had endeavored to impart during His 3-1/2 years of ministry. Even so, we know Thomas' faith was not as strong as it could have been:

"Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou
goest; and how can we know the way?" John 14:5.

Some of the disciples did not realize that the "way" was in their midst, and had been close to them for the past 3-1/2 years. Being Jews, they had been taught since childhood from the law, of the coming of the Messiah, to establish God's kingdom on earth. They no doubt expected that to happen while He was with them since they believed He was the Savior sent from God. He had to prepare them for His death and resurrection, but encouraged them not to fear, for He would be with them in spirit. They were not to be left without knowing - they would be helped by the Spirit to come to a fuller understanding:

"These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present
with you.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the
Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things,
and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I
have said unto you."

John 14:25-26.

On the Day of Pentecost, the Spirit of God did visit them as promised - expanding their knowledge and bringing to them a fuller understanding of the word of truth. The Spirit was also a source of comfort, for they no doubt would feel overwhelmed after losing Him from their midst and knowing they must carry on His work alone.

We are blessed today because of the Spirit's visitation upon these disciples, giving them remembrance and recollection of His words so that they could record these events for our help.

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“But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.” John 16:4.

Those covered under His name through belief in Him are privileged to know His closeness and care in spirit - to help and nurture those that are His so that they may know they are not alone. If we are known as His, we know the “way” through the love of God

M.C.S.

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

**“--- Nation shall rise --- against nation
--- and earthquakes in diverse places.”
Matthew 24:7**

The words of Jesus indicate that earthquakes in various places in these last times, will indicate that His return to this good earth is approaching.

Science would indicate that disturbances that come from time to time to the earth are part of a natural course of events. But Christ's thoughts those many years ago, are a clear Heavenly sign.

The shaking of this planet's surface reveals that the word of Christ is the word of God, and reveals the greatness of Heavenly power that is seen in the surface disruptions in various places in the lands, and also, under the sea.

In the New Testament the Almighty, through His disciple, referred to disturbances of the past which also had indications for shaking of future events.

“See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven.

Whose voice than shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.”
Hebrews 12:25-26.

There have been disturbances above and also in the earth's surfaces, which have recently had an upsetting effect upon some nations.

We will make reference to some of them. In Haiti came the January 13th earthquake. There was wreckage in the market-place in the Caribbean island's capital of Port-au-Prince. Certain celebrities have travelled to this land in an endeavour to raise funds to be of help to those who have been affected by the disturbances. And then came an earthquake in Chile, and hundreds of people died from the injuries they received, that the rubble of falling buildings gave

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to them. This quake had a magnitude which was one of the largest ever recorded. There was even fear that there might be further shocks, and such might have a consequence to the Chilean peoples' safety.

There was a degree of needy hardship for the people as lack of water and food occurred. Additionally, it is reported that there were thousands of people left homeless by the quake.

With these events came deteriorating behaviour by these people. We will quote a very sad report:-

"Police patrols were stepped up to deter looters, who were caught taking goods from supermarkets, despite efforts by authorities to clear the crowd with tear gas and water cannon."

One commentator said:-

"--- The native population (went) to higher ground amid fears that (a place mentioned) would be swamped by TSUNAMI waves. --- with lines of communication knocked out it is not known if they made it or not."

This report is a sad and troubling one. But does the world turn to the great Creator for His alleviating help? They do not! But how comforting are the words of scripture to those of FAITH!

We will conclude with a very meaningful verse:-

"God arose in judgment, to save all the meek of the earth
- SE-LAH." (consider) Psalms 76:9.

Here is an unshakable promise from the Source of all Our Good! Those who had the Father in Heaven, to submit to the way of His Spirit have God's saving care!!

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NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS FOR MAY 2010

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

Sunday: Breaking of Bread 11:30 am

Thursday: Bible Class 3:30pm; Forestville, Hamburg & Fredonia

Every Third Week: Revelation Study

As springtime approaches we are reminded of the rebirth in accordance with God's eternal plan. Indeed to every thing there is a season and we rejoice in the knowledge of God's purpose which gives us hope in the return of our Lord and Savior:

"...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.

May we grow in the hope of God and be sustained by His merciful nurturing.

M.C. S.

MANCHESTER

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.00 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 2.00 p.m.

Though these are days of "small things", the time of very great events are drawing ever nearer, as the loving merciful work of the Most High moves on in the wonder of its Heavenly glorious design.

That we have been graciously looked upon by our Father from above to have such knowledge, and also the loving fellowship we have which goes along with it is a very gracious blessing indeed, in a world so lacking of spiritual understanding.

For more information or to read our literature, log onto:

www.remnantofchristsecclesia.com