

FEBRUARY 2012

A Monthly Magazine issued by

The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of
Papal and Protestant Christendom

A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

“Take heed that ye be not deceived”

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

JUSTIFIED BY THE LAW

IN PARTICULAR SO LOVE HIS WIFE

A BIBLE CLASS

WHAT IS TRUTH?

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

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AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

"WHEN SHALL THESE THINGS BE?"

The Lord Jesus spoke with those who were with Him in the temple:

"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

Those who heard Jesus' declaration that the temple would be destroyed, asked:

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

Jesus answered:

"... Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them." Luke 21:8

There is only one Jesus Christ, the Messiah, who never sinned, but glorified God until He cried out on the cross:

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

Jesus rose after three days in His sepulchre, and ascended to His Father after 40 days of further ministering to His disciples.

There were many signs which Jesus revealed to those who asked: "... when shall these things be?" We know that the temple was destroyed by the Romans in AD 70, a sign fulfilled. Today we also look for these signs, telling us of the near return of the Lord Jesus to establish the kingdom of God, and to preach the gospel message of the kingdom and the name of Jesus Christ to any who will heed the last call.

Let us look at these signs to accomplish God's purpose, which Jesus revealed before He was crucified and rose again:

"... when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by." Luke 21:9

Today there are wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; revolutions in Egypt, Libya, Kenya, and Syria:

"... Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Luke 21:10

Also, Jesus continued:

"... great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven." Luke 21:11

Earthquakes in recent times have caused massive destruction and loss of many lives in every part of the earth, along with famines and pestilences. All these are from heaven, for only God's power can bring about such devastation. Man's efforts are confounded; they cannot produce such power!

"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

As His witnesses, we are not yet persecuted and delivered into prisons; but are at times ridiculed. Some have been brought before judges! We don't know what may come to try and prove our faith.

Further, Jesus revealed:

"Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer:" Luke 21:14

To settle is to ordain, to purpose, to speak from the heart – rather than to pre-meditate, to think, to take time to prepare an answer, and Jesus tells why:

“For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.”

Luke 21:15

What a promise! To be given a mouth to clearly speak through the Spirit’s wisdom, requires one’s faith and reliance upon the Almighty to conquer all adversaries!

“And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.”

Luke 21:16

Stephen was put to death just one year after Jesus spoke these warnings; and others have likewise suffered.

Further, Jesus revealed:

“... ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake.”

Luke 21:17.

Even today, many who are in any way associated with the name of the Lord Jesus, or who through the ages have served the God of Israel, have been abhorred by millions of Arabs and other adversaries. Jesus therefore comforted His brethren:

“But there shall not an hair of your head perish.”

Luke 21:18

Earlier Jesus told His disciples:

“What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul (spirit): but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will

I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 10:27-28,30,32

In answer to the question: "... when shall these things be?" – Jesus revealed that they shall come to pass in God's own time. We, brethren and sisters, see the many signs throughout the world, and we, too, seek to know when the coming of Jesus will be; for He comes to accomplish God's purpose with this earth. Jesus' comforting words to His disciples are to help us as well today:

"In your patience possess ye your souls." Luke 21:19

We have the faith that He shall surely come, but we do not know when. It requires patience, endurance, waiting, trusting, and above all, faith. James expressed help to possess patience:

"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.

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

Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy."

James 5:7-8,10-11

Paul also helps us to possess patience:

"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 further helps his brethren:

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Let us therefore come boldly (confidently) unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

Hebrews 4:14-16

Living in such a troubled world as we do today, how much we need His mercy and grace! However, we look with patience and hope for the coming of the Lord Jesus, to assemble those who will be at His right hand, and who will reign with Him for eternity, as kings and priests in the kingdom of God.

J.A.DeF.

**“JUSTIFIED BY THE LAW”
(Galations 5:4)**

From our verse under consideration we learn that Paul was addressing an issue which the apostles in the early ecclesias had to face, and which even today in various sects of Christendom still exists:

“Christ is become of no effect unto you whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”
Galations 5:4

This issue is “Judaizing”, which is an attempt to reinstate elements of the Mosaic law after the death of Christ and the establishment of a new covenant through Him.

That this would be a frequent problem is understandable, since many of those forming the early church were first Jews living their lives under the law. The transition to a new order under Christ, where the burdens of the law had been fulfilled and done away with, would be difficult for many to accept.

An example of this wayward thinking is described in Acts:

“And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.
When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.”
Acts 15:1-2

After Paul and Barnabas arrived to counsel with those in Jerusalem, we read further details of this contentious question of circumcision:

“But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.
And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.”
Acts 15:5-6

This Judaizing was coming from certain members of the ecclesia who had been Pharisees, and thus would have been steeped in the law. Since circumcision was the token under the law of unity with God, they argued it must be continued with Gentile brethren who had now accepted Christ.

Peter was also in agreement with Paul and Barnabas that the law had been fulfilled in Christ's death and addressed the brethren saying:

"And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." Acts 15:7-11

It was then agreed that several of the apostles, mentioning, Paul, Barnabas, Judas and Silas would travel with letters to the various assemblies to explain this matter of Judaizing, so all would be of one accord.

"Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

It seemed good unto us being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.”

Acts 15:24-29

In arguing against the need for circumcision, Paul earlier had said to the Galatians:

“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 5:2-4

Paul is not saying that Christ is of none effect and you are a debtor to do the whole law if you happen to be circumcised. Rather that this is the case if you decide to become circumcised in a misguided belief that it is a requirement passed on from the law. Paul is saying that if you keep one part of the law, you must keep all of the law and James agrees:

“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. James 2:10-11

Paul and James were pointing out the fallacy of the Judaizer’s logic – if it was true that one part of the law should be followed, then technically, they should be following ALL of the law, and of course they were not. Paul further said in our verse under consideration in Galatians 5:4 that those who considered themselves to be justified by the law had fallen from grace, because in actuality, the law justified no one – it could not save:

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” Galatians 2:16

If the law did not save – what was its purpose? Paul explains:

“Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Galatians 3:19,24-27

The law itself could do nothing to justify or save a person. It was never meant to be kept “by the letter” as most of the Jews did. Instead, it was meant to be kept in the spirit of faith and love which it revealed.

In a practical sense, the law was perhaps similar to additional training wheels put on a bicycle in order to give better balance and stability when a youngster is first learning to ride. When the training wheels are later removed, it gives the rider greater freedom of mobility and speed to do many things on the bicycle not possible with the training wheels. However, one is still constrained by the laws of physics and doing certain things (which the training wheels would have prevented), can cause lack of control ending in a serious fall or accident. There are certain things possible which would have been impossible with the wheels in place – such as navigating rocky terrain, greater speed or leaning into a fast corner, but our goal is the same – to keep steady and not fall.

We today, not schooled under the law have the writings of the New Testament, along with the Old, which speak not of absolutes but of the spirit which is pleasing to God. What saved those who died under the law was their understanding of what the law pointed forward to – their belief and faith in the promised Savior. Their position is no different from ours today, except we have the added benefit of knowing the Savior as the Lord Jesus Christ while they looked forward in faith to His coming.

The wayward thinking of some in the early ecclesias to reinstitute precepts of the law after Christ's sacrifice, was a misguided attempt to err on the side of caution. Yet in doing so they were nullifying the sacrifice of Christ and showing a grave disrespect for the very means of salvation that the law was attempting to teach! The price for those who would seek to follow the letter of the law is the loss of their hope, even after baptism into the death of Christ.

J.N.S.

**"...IN PARTICULAR SO LOVE HIS WIFE"
(Ephesians 5:33)**

The scripture speaks clearly for the upholding of marriage as a principle. But as the years have gone by, at the end of these days, there has been a great falling from a reverent respect for what has been heavenly direction from The Beginning.

There are many scriptural passages strongly upholding respect for marriage. We will quote a few of them:

"The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead she is at liberty to be married to whom..." I Corinthians 7:39

"Marriage is honourable in all..." Hebrews 13:4

"As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride..." Isaiah 62:5

These passages staunchly speak for marriage. But alas the respect for what has been such a blessing to the man and his woman has had quite a shock. There has been a decline in marriage over the last 40 years. (We will quote some of the media figures):

Of the estimated 44.9 million people in England and Wales, aged over 16 in mid 2010, 48% (21.6 million) were married. More than a third (35.6%) were single (16million). The divorced were 9.3% (4.2 million). There were fewer marriages; a continuing drop in couples getting married. People are most likely to divorce at the age of 53, and there are more divorced women than men.

One report suggested that it is thought the reason for this is that more divorced men remarry each year than divorced women, so leaving more divorced women in the population. However, statisticians declare "marriage remains a widespread aspiration... It is within people's reach." We should be showing how it is within people's reach. A study group said "if a couple want long term stability, especially for children, they should make the formal commitment to uphold marriage."

We consider the present media figures. Of the estimated (England and Wales) total population, there has been a decrease in marriage. However there was one statement bearing the news:

"England and Wales still had one of the highest proportions of married couples in Europe... (Also) Just under 114,000 couples were granted a divorce in 2009. It was the lowest figure since 1974."

As a news report this is, however, still a rather sad one. It is the situation as lamented by the scripture. Some reports do have bright aspects, but such a general deterioration is a sign and speaks of the working out of the Heavenly purpose, which is moving on to a final outcome, the bringing of the Kingdom from above.

A BIBLE CLASS

**“YE SHALL NOT HAVE GONE OVER
THE CITIES OF ISRAEL...”**

(Matthew 10:23)

After being baptized by John the Baptist:

“... Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few.

Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into the harvest.”

Matthew 9:35-38

Jesus sent forth his twelve apostles, saying:

“... Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not.

But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Matthew 10:5-7

The apostles were to preach the gospel: the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. Jesus instructed His apostles as they went out to preach:

“And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

And when ye come into an house, salute it.

And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land

of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.”
Matthew 10:11-15

The apostles were to preach the gospel to those who would be listening, accepting, and believing. And so they would abide in that city or house, continuing to help them grow in spirit and peace.

Jesus further spoke to His apostles:

“But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man (Jesus) be come.”
Matthew 10:23

If the city persecuted the apostles, they were to flee into another city, to enquire if it would be worthy to hear the gospel.

Jesus had spoken earlier:

“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.”
Matthew 7:6

So the apostles would depart from the city or house which refused their teaching, and preach the gospel message in another city.

Further, it is recorded:

“And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples (apostles), he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.”
Matthew 11:1

Jesus and His apostles did enter many cities and many houses to enquire whether they might be worthy. Many were not worthy to learn of God’s purpose with the earth.

Today there are a few who are striving to keep God’s commandments, hoping to find a place at the right hand of the Lord Jesus when He comes to judge those who are responsible. What joy there will be for those who hear His words:

“... Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Matthew 25:34

J.A.DeF.

"WHAT IS TRUTH?"

(John 18:38)

This important question was posed by Pilate to the Lord Jesus as He was brought before him for interrogation before His crucifixion.

"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all." John 18:37-38

The Lord Jesus' purpose was not only to bear witness to the Truth of God's Word but as the fulfillment of that Word. In the record of John, He prayed in the final hours before His capture and crucifixion for His disciples, that they may be cared for by the Father:

"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

John 17:15-17

The Concordance renders the word "truth" as verity, being true or in conformity with correctness and honesty. The word of God is truth because it is impossible for God to lie.

Much of the record in John speaks of Truth and of the fulfillment of God's word seen in His Son:

"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.

And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John 1:14,16-17

From His own words, the Lord Jesus explains that He is God's word fulfilled in truth:

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

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him."

John 14:5-7

It is very evident from these references that God's word is Truth and a guide to be used in life. Or as David said, "a light unto my path". God's word from the beginning through the law and the prophets, spoke of the way a man should walk in order to be pleasing to Him. Incorporated in that word was the promise of salvation through the Light and Truth personified that would be sent to fulfil God's word completely.

Part of the Song of Moses speaks of the only way to find truth being through God's word:

"Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass;

Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."

Deuteronomy 32:1-4

In the first epistle of John the apostle speaks of Christ, the Word of God fulfilled, and the only means possible unto the Father if one seeks to fellowship Him:

"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."

I John 1:1-3

If His word is not in us, then Truth is not in us, making us realize that adherence to Truth is not possible without being found in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

"But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."

I John 2:5-6

It may have seemed a very complex question asked by Pilate – What is Truth? Yet how simply it is revealed to those who seek it, that Truth is found only in God's Word and personified in His Son, the Savior who has provided freedom from the curse of sin and death:

"..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.

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

THE TIMES OF HASTE!

The prophet Habakkuk, in what was his witness, makes the following declaration:

“Oh Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid; O Lord revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy. God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. And His brightness was as the light...”

Habakkuk 3:2-4

These words are the Heavenly prophetic response to the prophet. And the Heavenly message continues with further comforting words, as follows:

“Thou wentest forth for the salvation of the people, even for salvation with thine anointed” (Christ) Habakkuk 3:13

This is a great sign of Christ’s return from Heaven. As times have prospered in various places of the earth other matters have seen deterioration. We will quote from the media reporting on a worsening of national financial circumstances. In the United Kingdom, financial difficulties are now described in figures of billions of pounds.

As we consider such matters we ourselves received the following information from which we will quote:

“German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Europe was experiencing its ‘most severe test in decades’ but claimed it was growing closer in the turmoil. She said she expects turbulence in 2012 as she does ‘everything’ to save the euro and bring an end to the debt crisis. Mrs Merkel is expected to meet with France’s Nicolas Sarkozy in Berlin.. to discuss revisions to Europe’s fiscal rule book following decisions made at the December summit. A final accord by euro leaders on the German-French proposals agreed at the

summit is due in March. President Sarkozy kicked off the New Year by warning voters 2012 was 'full of risks' and France's future is in the balance. Italy's President Giorgio Napolitano used his New Year message to tell people they will have to make sacrifices to avoid financial collapse. He added: 'The sacrifices won't be useless. Only united can we progress and count as Europeans in a radically changed world.' Greek Prime Minister Lucas Papademos warned of a 'difficult' year and said the country must fight to remain in the euro and avoid economic collapse.

So as we survey this world situation with all its monetary difficulties and with all its troubles, we remember these words:

"Thou wentest forth for the salvation of the people.. .with thy Christ."

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS FOR FEBRUARY 2012

HAMBURG, NEW YORK

Sunday: Breaking of Bread 11:30 am

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

Every Third Week: Revelation Study

Our work of witnessing through monthly mailings and The Remnant Magazine brings an occasional inquiry allowing us to be encouraged in this work. As the day of Christ's return approaches, this work may be blessed in those who might remember what they have heard and read.

We are thankful for the continued blessing of the fellowship and counsel we share with our brethren across the seas.

M.C.S.

MANCHESTER

Sunday: Breaking of Bread 11:30 am

Thursday: Bible Class 2:00 pm;

With the passing on of our brother J. A. DeFries may we express thoughts of mindfulness of how close we were to him; though so far from him; in distance, in these last few days. As the years have gone by many events have occurred, but through these changing times we have kept close, endeavouring to be supporters of each other. Oh, what a help he has been and a comfort to ourselves. John has been laid to rest, we having the encouragement in thoughts of the resurrection, which most certainly will come. How wonderful is the heavenly promise to the Ecclesia of our Lord!

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

www.remnantofchristseclesia.com