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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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SIGNS OF HIS COMING
NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

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THE LEAVEN OF HYPOCRISY

In our recent portions from the Book of Mark, Jesus warns his disciples regarding the leaven of the Pharisees and Herodians - those Jews who supported Herod's rulership:

“...Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.”
Mark 8:15

On the surface, these words do not seem to have meaning today in our living, for the Pharisees and Herodians are no longer an influence in society

From Mark's record we learn further of the circumstances surrounding this incident:

“And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him. And he (Jesus) sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? Verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.”
Mark 8:11-12

The Pharisees tried to catch Jesus verbally in order to discredit Him and His ministry. With His spiritual power, He knew their intent and sighed in sorrow for their attempt to deceive.

The disciples responded to the Lord's warning to “beware of the leaven of the Pharisees” etc., by wondering if He was criticizing them for not stocking the boat with bread and other provisions:

“Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread.”
Mark 8:14-16

They didn't fully perceive Jesus' words, and the record of this incident in Matthew gives further detail as He answered them thus:

“How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?

Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.”
Matthew 16 :11-12

He wanted them to be aware of their doctrine for it was not in accordance with God’s word. What was the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees? We are told in Luke chapter 12:

“...Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.”
Luke 12:1

Hypocrisy is described as a pretending to be what one is not or giving pretence of virtue and piety when one is not.

Here is the help given for us today - that although the Pharisees and Sadducees are no longer an influence in our society, their doctrine of hypocrisy is always alive wherever the flesh lives and thrives. The flesh often tries to appear more righteous than it is in order to seek favor with men. The behavior of the flesh is no different today in the year 2012 than it was in the time of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

An example of their hypocrisy and false piety is seen in Jesus’ words as recorded in Matthew:

“Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat:

All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.”
Matthew 23:1-7

On the surface they appeared pious but their aim was to please self so that in self-pride they were puffed up in that men looked at them in admiration and respect calling them Rabbi. This was not humility as the Lord God required of all men.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.”
Matthew 23:14

How clearly Jesus taught that hypocrisy is abhorrent before God - for hypocrisy is a lie - showing a pious exterior but underneath is the proud fleshly characteristic which God hates. This flesh-oriented thinking is very evident in their following question to the Lord Jesus:

“Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk:”
“...Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.
Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?”
Matthew 22:15-17

If they really believed that Jesus taught the “way of God in truth” then they should have followed Him, obeying His teachings. However, the Lord Jesus knew the intent of their minds and could step around their attempts to entangle Him and quoted Isaiah in response to them:

“Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”
Matthew 15:7-9

In the day of the Lord’s coming to judge those responsible to God’s word, we are told to watch for we know not the time of His appearance. In parable the Lord Jesus taught what would be the fate of the evil man who disregarded God’s precepts:

“The lord of that (evil) servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
Matthew 24:50-51

For the hypocrite, there will be no portion given in that blessed land to be established as the Kingdom of God. To them will be rejection at Christ’s judgement seat and a casting out where they will bewail their position with “weeping and gnashing of teeth”.

Let us beware as Jesus’ warned, of this doctrine of hypocrisy, that it enters not into our living. For like leaven in a lump of dough, it can start as a small matter but grow and grow until it encompasses the entire loaf and the whole of one’s living.

M.C.S.

“... MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THEE...”

II CORINTHIANS 12:9

While reading the words of Paul in II Corinthians chapter 12, the words of Jesus appear:

“... My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness....”
II Corinthians 12:9

What is **grace**? According to the dictionary, it is unconstrained and undeserved divine favor or good will. It is also listed as God’s loving mercy displayed to man for the salvation of his soul. According to the concordance, grace is favor, a benefit, or a gift.

Upon further investigation, I Corinthians 11:24-25, is the only other location in all of Paul’s epistles where words are highlighted in this manner. In this reference, Jesus’ words are quoted at the time when He first established the breaking of bread and the drinking of wine in remembrance of Himself. In both instances, Jesus’ words deal with His gift of grace granted to us by Him and our Holy Father.

By grace we have hope of obtaining the great riches of God:

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” II Corinthians 8:9

Jesus was rich with the blessing of God, but sacrificed Himself to God for us, so that we might be covered and have hope of those same riches. Jesus was sinless, yet endured the punishment of a sinner so that our sins could be covered by His sacrifice. Because of God’s gift to mankind (Jesus), all now have hope of life everlasting in the Kingdom. Paul’s words to his Roman brethren speak a similar message to us:

“Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 5:18-21

Jesus’ words to Paul, in II Corinthians 12, were in response to Paul’s asking that the thorn in his flesh be removed from him. This ‘thorn’ was likely his failing eyesight. By Jesus’ response, Paul would understand that Jesus’ gift was great; and by having infirmities and persecutions, the faithful can grow stronger in the ways of God:

“For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”

II Corinthians 12:8-10

The grace of God, granted through Jesus, gives us hope that we can overcome all things fleshly, because of the peace that comes with such faith. That peace is why Paul rejoiced in his infirmities - as seen in his words to his Roman brethren:

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” Romans 5:1-6

The Lord Jesus comforted His disciples with His words, telling them to have peace because of His gift to them, and all the faithful, that He had overcome the world:

“Behold, the hour cometh, yea is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” John 16:32-33

Paul’s words to Titus tell us the essence of what the grace of God has given us:

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Titus 2:11-14

As Jesus' words to Paul come back to mind, we are reassured that His gift is sufficient. Jesus has provided the gift, but we must accept it and the responsibilities that come with it. We must deny our fleshly inclinations, we must seek God, and have faith that the gift of grace provided, truly is sufficient for us. So let us rejoice in this knowledge and strive to take up our cross and follow Him.

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."
II Corinthians 9:15

E.J.M.

THE LIFE OF JOSHUA

The major events in the life of Joshua are carefully kept on record in God's holy writ and come down the years as an exhortation to us. Joshua had been faithful and valiant for his people who had been, among the nations of men, uniquely the Lord's people. How greatly they had been helped. Joshua, as an instrument of this help, as he became old, realised there was a need to encourage them and exhort them and so he addressed them in these words.

"Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the Lord your God.

And, behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you: all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.

When ye have transgressed the covenant of the Lord your God...then shall the anger of the Lord be kindled against you... "

Joshua 23:11,14,16

Joshua perceived how important it was that Israel did not slacken in their faith in any way. As he got old, he made great efforts to encourage them to stir themselves in their faith:

"And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God.

And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood (river) in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.

And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac.

And ye went over Jordan...And I have given you a land...Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth:...and serve ye the LORD." Joshua 24:1-3, 11,13,14

So, Joshua, given help from Heaven, conveyed these words to Israel. A wonderful effort shown by him to Israel as he came to his later days, an exhortation to us too and an encouragement in our own times!

**“A HEART ALSO WILL I GIVE YOU, AND A
NEW SPIRIT WILL I PUT WITHIN YOU: AND I WILL
TAKE AWAY THE STONY HEART OUT OF YOUR FLESH,
AND I WILL GIVE YOU AN HEART OF FLESH.”
EZEKIEL 36:26**

Within the context of Ezekiel’s prophecy was a future promise to Israel, who was now scattered among various nations and no longer the unified nation of Israel, dwelling within their land of promise.

“Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman.

Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it:

And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them.” Ezekiel 36:17-19

This prophecy was sent to give them hope and a promise of God’s good work that He would bring upon them in His own time, even though He punished them with captivity and dispersal out of their land for their unrepentant sin of idolatry.

They were taken captive and removed from the land of their inheritance because of disobedience and a turning away from God’s precepts, following instead the imagination of their own hearts. As recorded by His prophets, God promised to bring them out from all the nations to which they were scattered, and establish them once again in the land He promised to their fathers.

“For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.” Ezekiel 36:24-25

Israel from the time of their dispersal was not to become a in

nation until after World War II in 1948. To Bible scholars at that time, it would have been a tremendously exciting time to see part of God's prophecy fulfilled concerning the nation of Israel.

Israel when restored in the kingdom age will be comprised of both natural and spiritual Israelites. From natural Israelites like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to believing Gentiles who recognize Jesus as the Savior and are grafted into the hope of Israel through faith, becoming part of God's people.

This same prophecy of restoration to Israel was given earlier in Ezekiel chapter 11:

"Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come. Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel
And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:
That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." Ezekiel 11:16-17,19-20

How merciful is our God, that although we have sinned and lacked in all we should do before Him, yet is His mercy great before us if we will repent and turn again unto Him, He will forgive and restore His people to favor.

Again through the prophet Zechariah is given God's promise of Israel's restoration in the day of His Son's return to the earth, when His kingdom will encompass the entire world from its capital Jerusalem:

"Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain." Zechariah 8:3

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.” Zechariah 8:7

The promise from God was always extended - if His people would seek him in humility and repentance, then God would be with them and be their Father and protector. His words do not change and that same promise is extended to us today as Gentiles grafted into His household that we too can share in faithful Israel's hope as part of His covenanted people.

M.C.S.

**“THE LORD WILL FEED THEM AS A LAMB IN A LARGE PLACE.”
HOSEA 4:16**

Hosea's prophecy, while mainly against Israel (the ten tribes) also included Judah as chapter 1 verse 1 reveals:

“The word of the LORD that came unto Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.”

Some background of this time may be helpful. During the time of the second king Jeroboam, Israel, the ten tribes, had turned away from God to serve idols. The kings after him continued in the same idolatry until approximately 721 when because of their backsliding their captivity came about through the king of Assyria. Judah was

much the same state, forgetting the law and practising idolatry similar to the surrounding nations until the reign of Hezekiah, who destroyed the groves and idols, cleansed the temple and turned the people back to God and His law.

The Lord sent the prophets Hosea and Amos to turn them from their evil, as well as giving warning of the judgments to come if they persisted. Both Israel and Judah before Hezekiah's reform were in a deplorable state; they had turned their backs on the Almighty, indulged in every deviation of the flesh and so God's pronouncement of their evil was given by Hosea:

"...the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.

By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood."

Hosea 4:1-2.

The priests as well as the common people had left His holy precepts and instead of leading and encouraging by example had abused their privileged position. Because of this shame, God's judgment was directed at them as well:

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou has forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

As they were increased, so they sinned against me: therefore will I change their glory into shame.

And there shall be, like people, like priest: and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them their doings."

Hosea 4:6,7,9.

Our particular verse under consideration continues with this condemnation:

"For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer: now the LORD will feed them as a lamb in a large place."

Hosea 4:16.

If Israel was described as backsliding, why would God feed

her "as a lamb in a large place?" Help to answer this question may be found as we look more closely at the meaning of the word "feed" used here. This word frequently means to feed or sustain with nourishment, but as used here means to waste, break or devour with evil intent. This same word is used by the prophet Isaiah foretelling of Judah's destruction:

"If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."

Isaiah 1:19-20.

Because there was a failure to submit and glorify God a devouring punishment was to come, but only if the faithful work of His prophet Hosea failed to touch their hard hearts. Understanding the meaning of this word "feed" as devour, our verse could be read as:

"For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer: now the LORD will devour them as a lamb in a large place."

Hosea 4:16.

A single lamb alone in a large place can easily be seen and taken without the natural protection of the flock. Here is a severe warning to Israel and Judah that no matter how strong they felt, God would destroy those who had turned from Him. Had they allowed themselves to be protected and hedged about by His law, they would know His blessing and care, but instead they sought out the broad or large way, reminding us of the words of the Lord Jesus:

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat;

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Matthew 7:13-14.

They were headed for destruction because of their own actions, yet Hosea's message was one of hope that some might hear and repent and turn from their wickedness:

“O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God; for thou has fallen by thine iniquity.

Take with you words, and turn to the LORD: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.” Hosea 14:1-2.

If they would only hear Hosea’s message and renew a right spirit within themselves, God would deal kindly and mercifully and so instructed the prophet to extend this hope:

“I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.

Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the LORD are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressor shall fall therein.” Hosea 14:4,9.

In His long suffering, God provided the prophets with words of warning and rebuke when first Israel and then Judah strayed from His ways, extending in love the hope of forgiveness if they would repent and turn back to Him. Yet for all His care, the imagination of their heart remained evil, showing the strength and will that the flesh can exert. Both Israel and Judah in time were taken captive and scattered because of their defiance to God’s warning that He would “feed them as a lamb in a large place.”

THE ZEAL OF THE LORD OF HOSTS WILL PERFORM THIS

In Isaiah we read of the perilous circumstances surrounding Hezekiah king of Judah. The king of Assyria had sent his messenger Rabshakeh to Jerusalem with a great army. Assyria had already captured Samaria and taken the children of Israel captive and was now come to conquer Jerusalem and her people. Standing outside the walls with an uncountable array of soldiers he challenged.

“... Hear the words of the great king, the king of Assyria. Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you; for he shall not be able to deliver you.

Beware lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the land of the king of Assyria?"

Isaiah 36:13,14,18.

He purposely did not speak in his own Syrian tongue but in the language of the Jewish people so that all the inhabitants of the city would hear his message and fear.

What did Hezekiah and the people respond in answer to these taunts?:

"But they held their peace, and answered him not a word; for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not."

Isaiah 36:21.

Hezekiah's trust was in God, and this alone caused him to command silence in the face of the enemy, for it was said of him:

"... he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses."

II Kings 18.6.

Assyria was a thorn to Hezekiah and his people. Their enemies blasphemed the God of Israel, defying His power and denying His ability to help them. When the men of Jerusalem brought this message to the king:

"... he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD."

Isaiah 37:1.

These actions expressed his humility and grief as he went before God seeking help in prayer. While so doing, he sent the elders, clothed in sackcloth to Isaiah the prophet beseeching his help as well:

"It may be the LORD thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left."

Isaiah 37:4.

They did not rush to take up arms or gather the people against the Assyrians, but instead in humility and subjection debased themselves with sackcloth, entreating Isaiah to pray for them asking for God's deliverance.

Because of their trust and faith in Him, an answer to prayers came swiftly through His prophet:

"By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and four score and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." Isaiah 37:34-36.

Think of an hundred and eighty-five thousand men dead overnight - no battle, no noise and confusion, no weapons, simply found as dead corpses in the morning! What a miraculous display of God's might and power on behalf of His people. Had not Hezekiah trusted and prayed in humility, the outcome might have been very different. But because of his yielding spirit, he and the people were spared the agony of battle and the Lord became their sword and shield, fighting for those who feared and obeyed Him:

"For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this." Isaiah 37:32.

Though His people be weak and seemingly defenceless, He has promised His care and comfort to those who turn to Him for help. This was Hezekiah's hope that if he submitted in trust, and turned to God with fear and trembling, the Almighty would likewise turn to him with power and might to deliver - "the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this".

God delivered Jerusalem because of His promise to David and because of Hezekiah's submission and faithfulness, for during his reign he endeavored to walk in His ways and to turn the people to righteousness:

“And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did. He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan. He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him.”
II Kings 18:3-5.

Before Hezekiah’s time the people had fallen into idolatry, adopting the pagan practices of the nations around them. Yet the King moving in fear, removed the groves and high places, cleansed the temple and ordered the holy services done by the priests and Levites to begin again. He brought the elders and the people to sacrifice burnt offerings and wrote letters to all Israel and Judah encouraging the celebration of the passover at Jerusalem. Through these actions of faith and obedience he endeavoured to reflect during his reign a measure of the holiness that had been promised at the end of God’s purpose. Isaiah speaks of this righteous government and its ruler:

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

Again, “the zeal of the LORD of hosts”—the only power able to establish that perfect kingdom to be ruled over with judgment and justice, without the thinking of the flesh entering in. A great hope and one which Hezekiah tried in measure to emulate while king of Judah.

How much this speaks of what our zeal should be as we are reminded of the mighty acts done for those like Hezekiah and of what awaits in His Kingdom of peace for those who fervently hear

and do His word today. As we consider Hezekiah's circumstances and what a great test he faced, our own difficulties pale in comparison. Yet the reward held out is the same.

Rabshakeh mocked the God of Hezekiah but was destroyed by the zeal of the Almighty. How much we can be helped as we call to mind these events and the example of Hezekiah's trust That same deliverance is awaiting those who look to Him for help, trusting in the zeal of the Lord of hosts which can and will perform all things.

SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD

"And as it was in the days of Noe,
so shall it be also in the days of
the Son of man." Luke 17:26

The above words were spoken by Jesus to His disciples upon the Mount of Olives in response to their question:

"... the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matthew 24:3

Jesus' answer would take them back to the words of Moses when the world remembered Noah's time in Genesis 6:5:

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually". Genesis 6:5

And further in Genesis:

“The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.”

Genesis 6:11-12

As we look around us in the world today, who can deny the extent of violence and corruption in every facet of man’s existence. Such a view is expedited by the internet’s ability to streamline communication in a matter of seconds, allowing anyone to be informed of what is happening anywhere in the world.

It took Noah 120 years of preaching the truth and warning the world back then, but only his immediate family responded and were saved. As a sign today, thousands of preachers say they are ministering to God’s word, but are actually deceiving the world, only to benefit their own financial ends and lavish lifestyles.

Jesus warned His disciples:

“Take heed that no man deceive you.

For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.”

Matthew 24:4-5

Indeed the people of the world today are deceived by their own fleshly imaginations, wants and desires, relying on man’s ways which has brought the world to the brink of destruction, as it was in the days of Noah:

“For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

Matthew 24:38-39

M.C.S.

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS FOR OCTOBER 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

After a very hot and dry summer, we look forward to cooler fall weather with the changing of the seasons reminding us of God's magnificent handiwork. The majesty of God's creation allows us to rejoice as we anticipate Jesus' soon return to usher in the Kingdom of God on this earth. Then and only then will all men come to realize that truly God overrules in their affairs, exposing the appearance of man's flesh nature. We thank God for the knowledge of His saving grace.

M.C.S.

MANCHESTER

Sunday: Breaking of Bread 11:30 am

Thursday: Bible Class 2:00 pm

We value greatly the opportunity given to the Ecclesia to express our position in a time that we can describe as a "day of small things". We also delight to say that we take great comfort in the knowledge that we have loving Brethren and Sisters across the seas who join with us. May we write here of our gratitude for them, and say "thank you" for their thoughts for us.

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

www.remnantofchristsecclesia.com