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# 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"**

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A RELUCTANT PROPHET

LEARN NOT THE WAY OF THE HEATHEN

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NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

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## A RELUCTANT PROPHET

We have begun to read again the Book of Jeremiah in our Daily Reading Schedule. As we look to his history as recorded in the scriptures, we might call him a reluctant prophet:

“Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! Behold I cannot speak: for I am a child.”

Jeremiah 1:4-6

Jeremiah’s reluctance was understandable. He was overwhelmed when God came to him and explained that he was to chastise Judah and Jerusalem for their wicked and idolatrous ways. Yet he was told a work was before him, for his name meant, “who Jehovah calls out”.

He was not the first reluctant prophet, for we remember the record of Moses when the Almighty told him that he was to be Israel’s deliverer:

“Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?” Exodus 3:9-11

Again an overwhelming and fearful task was to be done after he had fled for his life from Egypt. But God in pity gave reassurance:

“...Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.” Exodus 3:12

Even though given God’s assurance that He would be with

Moses to strengthen and help him, he was still fearful that the elders of Israel would not believe that he had been sent to them as a prophet and deliverer:

“And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.

And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod.

And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand:

That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.” Exodus 4:1-5

So fearful was Moses of this calling that he again protested unto God saying:

“... O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue” Exodus 4:10

Again in mercy, God knowing that he feared, He granted his brother Aaron to be his spokesman:

“And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.

And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.

And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs. Exodus 4:14-17

We do not know Jeremiah's age but according to the chronology, the word of the Lord came through him in the 13th year of the reign of Josiah, who reigned a total of 31 years, during Jehoiakim the son of Josiah's reign which totalled 11 years and to the end of the 11th year of king Zedekiah, after which the king was carried captive to Babylon. This amounted to approximately 42 years, a great deal of time.

Jeremiah prophesied against those of Judah and Jerusalem of God's anger to be meted out towards them because they refused to obey and worship the Lord God of their fathers and instead made sacrifices and burned incense to false gods. Also to those of Judah and Jerusalem, God's word came through Jeremiah that if they would surrender to the Babylonians, who came against them, no harm would befall them. This was not popular with the elders and princes who tried to falsely bolster the people and the fighting men to stand against the coming attack.

"Thus saith the LORD, He that remaineth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live; for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live.

Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, let this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt.

Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire." Jeremiah 38:2,4,6

There was no longer any bread in the city and so the king, princes and elders were content to let Jeremiah die in that miserable place. It would seem hopeless and surely death seemed near for him, yet through the influence of one of the king's eunuchs was he drawn up by cords out of the dungeon and saved.

These were dire times and Jeremiah's life was often in danger for speaking the truth. God even today looks for those who do not fear for themselves, but speak the truth of His ways to those who

will listen. To those who searched out and heeded to His word through Jeremiah, He provided a means of escape - and even today is an escape from the grave made possible for those who believe on Him and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Even to those hearing the severity of Jeremiah's message against them, was there a measure of hope - if they would turn back to God with repentance, so would He in mercy turn away His wrath from the punishment he had in store and show them mercy:

*"If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD, return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove.*

*For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings."*

*Jeremiah 4:1,3-4*

This is the same call that comes to us today. Will we turn to Him? We are helped from His word as were those in Jeremiah's day, and in the same manner - for He guides us if we are sensitive and witness faithfully to His truth as he did to all those before us, who have trusted in Him.

M.C.S.

**“LEARN NOT THE WAY OF THE HEATHEN...”**

**Jeremiah 10:2**

The words of the Lord given by Jeremiah tell us not to learn the way of the heathen. The heathen are those who do not know the ways of God, and are known by some of their actions, as described:

“Hear ye the word which the LORD speaketh unto you, O house of Israel:

Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.

For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman with the axe.

They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.

They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good.”

Jeremiah 10:1-5

The heathen are dismayed by the signs in heaven, because they do not know that it is God who gives the signs or that it is God’s purpose when the signs come to pass. Why are the customs of the people (heathen) vain? Think what they did! They took the tree and cut it down. That tree was one of the many in the forest, and was all part of God’s creation:

“And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.”

Genesis 1:31

We know that God created all things on the earth in six days, and he proclaimed them very good. The trees are part of the wonderful creation, and are a beautiful reminder of the simplistic beauty of God’s plan for the earth, as David’s words remind us:

“O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.”

Psalms 104:24

The heathen cut down that tree and made it into something else. The cutting down of the tree in itself isn't necessarily vain; but what they did afterwards is! They cut down the tree and then decked it with silver and gold, and fastened it with nails and a hammer so that it would not move. The heathen had just created an idol. Man took the simplistic beauty of the tree and perverted it by making it into a false god. Their actions were vain because they had taken the tree, which should have reminded them of the beauty of God's creation, and made it something to be worshipped instead of God. Any idol, either made by the hands of man or from the imagination of man, has no power, except within the minds of those who worship it. That is why it must be moved by man, it cannot speak to man, and it can do neither good nor evil. It is powered by the imaginations of man's mind, and has no other power within it, as seen in the words of Habakkuk:

“Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake: to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it. But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.”  
Habakkuk 2:19-20

Why might we be told to “keep silence” before the Lord? Unlike the lifeless idol, God is a living God who does not need to be told to teach, awake, or arise. God is the creator of all things and has devised a plan for the whole earth, and does not require our input to see His plans come to fruition, because His wisdom far exceeds the wisest of men:

“Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O LORD; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain: for as much as among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee. But they are altogether brutish and foolish: the stock is a doctrine of vanities.”  
Jeremiah 10:6-8

God is worthy to be worshipped, unlike the idols made by man. The idols represent man's want of freedom from having to worship God in the way that He requires. By making idols, man places them ahead of God, which allows him to worship what and

when he wants; but that is the vanity of man:

“Every man is brutish in his knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them.

They are vanity, and the work of errors; in the time of their visitation they shall perish.” Jeremiah 10:14-15

So let us remain focused on the ways of God, lest we become distracted by our own fleshly ambitions, and put the things of this world before the ways of God, as Paul warned his Corinthian brethren:

“For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” II Corinthians 11:2-3

If we can keep ourselves spiritually minded, rather than letting the complexities of the flesh distract us, we can let our love of God guide us, instead of our love of things rule us, as the heathen do. The words of Jesus emphasize the need of keeping the spirit of the law rather than the letter, as He spoke to a Pharisee:

“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” Matthew 22:37-40

These two commandments spoken by Jesus show us the simplicity of what God requires of us; but by no means does it suggest a godly man’s life will be easy as he struggles to please God. The Almighty’s way is simple, but it is the conflict with our flesh that makes our path difficult, as Jesus indicates in Matthew:

“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

The word "strait" means narrow or with obstacles standing close. It gives the impression of "that way" being the more difficult, because our flesh will place obstacles in that path. If we can keep our minds centered on God's way and not allow our flesh to build its idols, then we can understand and appreciate the beauty and simplicity of God's plan for us. But, if we are distracted and allow our worldly cares to control us, then we can understand the importance of Jesus' words from Luke:

"The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body is full of darkness.

Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light." Luke 11:34-36

So let our focus be on the singular beauty of the tree (the work of God), rather than on the building up of idols with our own ambitions, as the heathen do. By acknowledging the work and way of God, our lives can be simpler as we submit to Him. By contrast, the ways of the heathen refuse to acknowledge and worship God and His glorious plan.

E.J.M.

**“THE LAME AND THE BLIND THAT  
ARE HATED OF DAVID’S SOUL”**

**II Samuel 5:8**

The timeframe of this quote from II Samuel was made when David came up to Jerusalem to besiege it and become king over all Israel. He was already king over Judah with his capital in Hebron, but now the elders of Israel came to anoint him king over all Israel, for this had been promised him of God:

“So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the LORD: and they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months: and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.” II Samuel 5:3-5

There were still other nations inhabiting the land promised to Israel - nations that had not been totally removed when they entered the land under Joshua’s leadership.

Centered in Jerusalem were the Jebusites who came from Canaan, the son of Ham, who was the son of Noah:

“And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan.  
And Canaan begat Sidon his first-born, and Heth,  
And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgashite.”  
Genesis 10:6,15-16

Many of these nations occupied the land promised by God to the children of Israel. These nations were feared by ten of the twelve spies who came back with a fearful report and who persuaded the congregation to lose faith in God’s arm of strength there to overcome on their behalf. Because of their lack of faith, all the congregation of Israel were destined to wander forty years in the wilderness before they would have a second opportunity to enter the land promised.

All the spies acknowledged it was a bountiful land, but feared needlessly because of the presence of the inhabitants when they said to Moses and the congregation:

“...We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.

Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there (giants). The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.”

Numbers 13:27-29

These were Gentile nations which were to be conquered and removed from the land so that the Promised Land could be divided by lot among the tribes of Israel.

The tribe of Judah was given the portion which included Jerusalem and the Jebusites, and although they removed many of the inhabitants it is recorded they could not conquer the Jebusites totally. Therefore, they were in possession still of Jerusalem when David came to take it in battle:

“As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.”

Joshua 15:63

Now at the time of our subject reference in II Samuel, David was come to remove the Jebusites out of the city of Jerusalem and claim it as the capital for his kingdom of Israel.

It may seem odd that it would be quoted that David hated the blind and the lame. We know even though a warrior, David had a gentle spirit and was known as a man after God's own heart. Therefore the idea of him hating the blind or the lame, those in need of compassion, sounds hard to believe. But as we read more of the background leading up to the

conquest of Jerusalem, we can get a better sense of what this reference is really saying.

As David and his men came to Jerusalem ready to do battle, it was the Jebusites who said:

“...Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither”.  
II Samuel 5:6

Basically the Jebusites were taunting David and his army -saying he could not beat them - not even could he defeat the blind and the lame inside the city, so he surely would not conquer them! They were confident of their own strength. However, David did conquer them and took their city for his own because he had the Almighty God as his sword and shield:

“And David went on, and grew great, and the LORD GOD of hosts was with him.”  
II Samuel 5:10

David did not hate the blind and the lame for he was a spiritual man full of humility, pity and compassion for others. But do we not see even today in the political area the same kind of proud banter and how one candidate will throw barbs or taunts at his opponent in an attempt to weaken or discredit him? This is what the Jebusites were doing - trying to weaken David’s resolve and make him afraid by boasting of their own prowess. This same record in I Chronicles shows their threat in another way:

“And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, Thou shalt not come hither. Nevertheless David took the castle of Zion, which is the city of David.”  
I Chronicles 11:5

By saying “Thou’ shalt not come hither”, they were showing they felt superior to David and his army. They felt confident David was not going to defeat them. Yet defeat them he did and take their city Jerusalem and from then, for

from then on it was known as “the” city of David”.

David was always humble enough to inquire of the Lord when he was to enter into battle and seek His guidance and direction. And because of his gentle spirit he had the Lord at his right hand at all times:

“So David waxed greater and greater: for the LORD  
of hosts was with him.” I Chronicles 11:9

M.C.S.

**“A BIBLE CLASS”**

**“WHO IS BLIND AS HE THAT IS PERFECT”**

**Isaiah 42:19**

God’s word through the prophet Isaiah came to the children of Israel, reminding of His holy precepts and warning of divine punishment upon those who turned their back upon this gift:

“Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the LORD, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law.

Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.”  
Isaiah 42:24-25.

His fury and retribution came for a purpose - to make this wayward people aware of their failings, yet they “laid it not to heart”, for within a short time because of their sinfulness, they were sold into captivity. Yet, with mercy and long suffering the Almighty sent this sharp warning to open their eyes to the laxity into which they had slid:

“Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the LORD’s servant?”  
Isaiah 42:19.

The thought of being blind and deaf is often used in the Scriptures to describe those who will not spiritually see or hear His instruction. Worse yet in the Spirit’s eyes are those who in complacency feel they are perfect, in need of nothing. Not realizing their faults and the urgent need of His correction surely they will perish without hope.

This reminds of Jesus’ warning to the Laodiceans who also thought themselves without fault and to whom He spoke in vision through His apostle John:

“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.  
So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor

hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Revelation 3:15-17.

They were rich and satisfied with their situation in life. The flesh's deception had covered their eyes to their spiritual failings, making them unable to recognize their perilous condition. The Spirit's message came through John to shake them from their complacency, to warn of their unrighteous walk, just as the Lord Jesus in speaking to His disciples warned of the Pharisees perishing state:

"Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

Let them (Pharisees) alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

Matthew 15:13-14.

Unwilling to live by the spirit of truth as taught by the Law and Prophets they had not only blinded themselves and the people to its mercy, but refused to recognize the salvation possible in their midst in the Lord Jesus Christ who rebuked them saying~

"For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

John 9:39-41.

Their sin remained because they knew what was required but did nothing to rectify themselves with God. Without repentance they were hearers only of the word.

Being flesh, none can say he is perfect, for the carnal man naturally shuns God's correction, preferring to comfortably believe that all is well. Yet without His hand to guide and His word to direct into right paths, there is no spiritual exercise, no growth towards the end He has promised to those who will truly see and hear. Those

who are unwilling to change, feeling they are perfect, will not make the effort to develop the fruits of the spirit so pleasing to the Father, as Peter encouraging his brethren in this endeavor exhorted:

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.”

II Peter 1:4-9.

Where there is a lack of spiritual exercise, the flesh dominates, making one blind and deaf to God’s voice of correction. David, sensitive to the dangers of his own flesh prayed:

“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”

Psalms 119:18.

How valuable is Isaiah’s warning, for it is easy to grow complacent and content with one’s lot, allowing self-deception to delude and make one blind and deaf to the spiritual correction necessary to remain in His care.

M.C.S.

**“PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD”  
AMOS 4:12**

This prophecy through Amos, voices God’s displeasure of His people at that time. To come to our times of the New Testament:

“ Remember therefore how thou has received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.” Revelation 3:3

Here then is the sombre fact. Whether Israel of old or of the New Testament, the people of the New Covenant are called upon to “PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD.”

Looking into the Old Testament there are many warnings concerning behaviour, warnings of continuing failure in spiritual preparation. For example we quote the following:

“This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him.  
And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king.  
And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month which was in the seventh year of the king.  
For upon the first day of the first month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the fifth day of the fifth month came he to Jerusalem, according to the good hand of his God upon him.”  
Ezra 7:6-9

Those who had been the people of Israel in Ezra’s time were a broken nation, for they did not have their land. But they hung on to what they believed, valuing what they did have. This was an obedience of faith in their Holy Creator. It was a work of FAITH.

When they set off from Babylon at the time of Ezra, what faith was required to do such a thing. And details of this spiritual effort

are preserved in our WORD in this later time both as a history but also as a word of righteous encouragement - and it is a considerable exhortation.

In this modern day, we may have cause to think, "How weak we have become". How depleted do the people of the Ecclesias become at times. But just as with those few Jews in days of old, the work goes on. The Jews of Ezra's day went on with their efforts. They were weak and few. But they prayed for help to GOD above - to their loving Father in Heaven, and they were greatly blessed. And this has parallels for today as our Heavenly Father looks down upon ourselves in our own times - for He is unchanging. This comforting assurance comes to us as we look at these matters, preserved in the divine record in the book of Ezra.

Let us ponder on the thought that there is more in the following writing than about names and numbers:

"The children of Bethlehem, an hundred twenty and three."  
Ezra 2:21

**“LIGHT IS SOWN FOR THE RIGHTEOUS,  
AND GLADNESS FOR THE UPRIGHT IN HEART.”  
(Psalm 97:11)**

In this psalm David focuses our attention on the fact that God’s eyes are always upon the righteous, and in gratitude for this exclaims:

“Rejoice in the LORD, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.”  
Psalm 97:12.

Rejoicing in gladness for the privilege of knowing Him as a Father and exulting in His many mercies helps one be lifted up to the realization that:

“Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.”  
Psalm 97:11.

The Almighty’s first act of creation was light, making it so through the pronouncement of His word alone. The light first, and then every living thing to follow, plants, animals and mankind. The thought of sown is putting into the ground in order to bring forth fruit, making us think of the Parable of the Sower where the seed as God’s word was cast into divers places, one being good soil, symbolic of the righteous:

“A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.  
And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold.”  
Luke 8:5,8.

Jesus explains the parable:

“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God  
But that (seed) on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth  
fruit with patience”.  
Luke 8:11,15.

After the planting, time is needed to bring forth as James confirms:

“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 night.” James 5:7-8

Isn't this the mind of God, that He looks upon His children with patience for that seed to grow and accomplish its purpose, to eventually bring forth spiritual fruit?

In the plagues of Egypt when darkness fell upon the land, light was sown for the righteous:

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there maybe darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt.

And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days:

They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days: but the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.” Exodus 10:21-23.

This light was given to righteous Israel because they were His children endeavoring to follow His light, but to the enemies of God, darkness so thick it could be felt.

The children of light are born of the spirit thus their eyes can perceive His light which is sown for them and provision is made for their every need as long as they keep their hearts and minds focused upon its divine source:

“The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.”

Luke 11:34-35.

If the eye is directed at the source of light, seeking it, the body is full of light but when the eye is evil or distracted by other desires, the body becomes full of darkness. Whatever we put our eyes or thoughts upon affects that which is within us and what comes forth.

Looking forward to the time when the Lord Jesus will reign with His saints in the Kingdom of God on earth, we know for those so blessed there will be no need of the sun, for the light of the spirit pervading will be all that is required.

“And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.” Revelation 22:5.

This city, new Jerusalem, will be the ultimate reflection of God through His children. Those who as spirit creatures will reign as kings and priests, judging those mortals so blessed to live in the tranquillity brought about by that righteous illumination. This too was David’s hope, as speaking of the inhabitants of that holy city he says:

“But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doeth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

Psalm 128:1-3.

For a tree to flourish and bring forth fruit there has to be both water and light, without which there can be no growth. Both are used in the Scriptures as symbols of God’s life-giving gift and exactly what John saw in vision while on the Isle of Patmos:

“And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”

Revelation 22:1-2.

God is taking out a people whom he likens to that tree of life whose ‘leaves’ or work with Christ, heal all nations - a soothing balm of justice and peace will flow because of their righteous judgment.

“The righteous shall flourish like the palm trees: he shall

grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;”  
Psalm 92:12-14.

God sows light for the righteous that they may bring forth fruit. As we endeavor to be children of that light our eyes must be always focused upon Him as we struggle to be like that seed which fell on good ground. Can we imagine the gladness to be felt by those found approved, those who will partake in all the comforts of Zion where:

“Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody”.

## “SIGNS OF HIS COMING”

“Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.” Luke 21:26

Man’s uncertainty and fear in his life and in his future can be measured by suicide rates. According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention statistics, yearly “approximately one million people in the world die by suicide”. This toll is higher than the total number of world deaths each year from war and homicide combined.

Further from the World Health Organization:

- In the last 45 years, suicide rates have increased by 60% worldwide.
- World-wide suicide ranks among the three leading causes of death among those aged 15 to 44 years.
- For every suicide there are at least 20 suicide attempts.
- Every 40 seconds someone dies of suicide.

In the United States the Lancet Medical Journal reported the rate of suicide between the years 2008 and 2010, increased four times faster than it did in the eight years before, was attributed to recession. The same trends have been found in Greece, Spain, Italy and other European countries since the world-wide recession. Suicides are now America’s leading cause of death by injury, surpassing car accidents.

Suicide is a complex issue with many risk factors contributing, such as psychological, social, biological and environmental. The perplexity of life today is taking its toll on mankind. It is no wonder that man’s fear of the present and future is increasing the desire to end it all. For many in the world, life seems hopeless, prompting them to seek a way out. What a sad commentary, but one predicted by the Lord Jesus 2000 years ago.

The solution to the world's many problems is not in man's hand but in God's, who has provided a way to escape through faith in His word and belief in His Son.

“And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”

Luke 21:28

M.C.S.

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS FOR JANUARY 2013

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

As the old year has ended and a new year begins, we can reflect on the past while anticipating the future.

This past year has seen trials and tests to strengthen our faith, as well as blessings to rejoice in. This coming year will undoubtedly present more challenges while we await the Lord's return. It is during this intervening time that we must value the fellowship and love we share with all of our brethren and sisters. May we continue to come along side each one, to help and comfort in these latter days.

M.C.S.

MANCHESTER

Sunday: Breaking of Bread 11:30 am

Thursday: Bible Class 2:00 pm

A NEW YEAR begins now. Let us give our thoughts to what the coming weeks will reveal and bring? Arab - Israeli hostility has persisted. The nations of men maintain their political alignments. Those who belong to the Ecclesias continue with wonderful help from THE WORD. As we seek to go WITH FAITH, our FATHER ABOVE helps us to continue. What a blessing and comfort to us are our brethren and sisters as we endeavour to go on in our calling. It is of the Gracious God and Father of Heaven. As we think upon the position of the Ecclesias, how very much we have to give thanksgiving for.

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

[www.remnantofchristsecclesia.com](http://www.remnantofchristsecclesia.com)