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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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THE BRANCH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

LOSE NOT THOSE THINGS WHICH WE HAVE WROUGHT

SEPARATION - APPLICATION OF THE SPIRIT

A BIBLE CLASS - SAUL'S DEATH

GOD - OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

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## THE BRANCH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

We have begun reading the record of the prophet Zechariah, whose words provide the help God has revealed to His children from the beginning. This help is the knowledge that He is mindful of His people to whom that word is given, that they might look to Him no matter their circumstances whether in trial or in blessing.

Zechariah was a prophet during the re-building of Jerusalem under the influence of Ezra and Nehemiah. At that time there was a need to rekindle a determination in those permitted to return from the captivity, to do the work of rebuilding that God intended. Zechariah as a prophet had a major work to perform in bringing the children of Israel into remembrance of their responsibilities toward God and how they could be blessed if they carried these out.

Looking at the first chapter we see God's desire to remind those of the captivity of what caused such a calamity to begin with, as verses 2-6 relate:

"The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore say thou unto them... Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you... Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the LORD. Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, Like as the LORD of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doing, so hath he dealt with us."

This brings to mind that God's word does not return to Him empty but rather accomplishes all it speaks of. Thus, Zechariah in bringing this message to His people, was allowing them the opportunity to see God's closeness. If only they could perceive, then would He reach out to them. We find help in the 3rd chapter verses 7-8 of the circumstances concerning Joshua the high priest:

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give

these places to walk among these that stand by.  
Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows  
that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for,  
behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH."

God spoke of that hope set before His people, whose sensitivity would allow them to look beyond the present to the One promised, the ultimate High Priest who would fulfill God's word, thus becoming His servant the BRANCH.

We know this was a type of Christ and see that this provision was likewise spoken of by Jeremiah:

"In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow unto David; and he shall execute judgement and righteousness in the land.  
In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, the LORD our righteousness. Jeremiah 33:15-16

Here was the same message given during the time of the captivity, a promise that spoke of the true Branch of righteousness that was covenanted to David. What God has looked for in His people from the beginning, is this desire to be righteous, to do according to His word, and those touched in their heart by that word have sought it earnestly. Jeremiah struggled to do so as did Zechariah, being instructed, a prophet to His people, endeavoring to make them mindful to turn to God and be aware of what He can do if there is obedience.

Similar words of hope and comfort by Isaiah, spoke of God's heedfulness toward His people in an earlier time:

"In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.  
And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem:  
When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgement, and by the spirit of burning.  
And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke

by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.  
And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.”  
Isaiah 4:2-6

Here are God’s words speaking of the blessedness in the Kingdom which will be ruled over by “the Branch”. It is a time when His glory will be a defence or covering. Defence used here, means a canopy spread over all. Failure to heed, failure to value His defence now, reveals there is dependence instead upon the flesh and we know only evil results come from this source, plus a loss of what is promised.

We see then the prophets Zechariah, Jeremiah and Isaiah spoke consistently of heeding His defence now and being mindful of the everlasting covering of grace with which God will glorify His people. Speaking of the sure mercies of David in Isaiah 11:1-4 we read:

“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:  
And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, and the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;  
And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:  
But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.”

Here again the view of the Kingdom of Israel, and the victorious taking of the kingship by the Branch, is emphasized as the only hope for true justice and judgment so longed for by mankind. As we contemplate this repetitive message given by a mindful and merciful Father, we are helped to value our relationship to Jesus the Branch and to the hope of this Kingdom. Our desire to have a part in these promises must be reflected daily in our living as we perceive the unchangeableness of His purpose and message. Jesus’ own words show us the holy and precious position we are permitted to know and how we may display our love and gratitude to Him:

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:1-5

The Lord Jesus's words reveal that without the provision of God's true vine there can be no attachment or gaining of strength from the root God has planted. He is the Husbandman taking care of the plant, nourishing and pruning as needed. As the Lord Jesus drew His strength from the nurturing of the Husbandman in time of trial, we too must struggle to keep ourselves joined to the vine as healthy branches, valuing the Husbandman's wise and loving care.

As we have seen God's word through the various prophets, the consistency of the message emphasizes that His desire is that we follow His ways. How critical it is then, to make our hearts hear and ponder that word, and to bring forth fruit suitable for His use.

As Zechariah, Isaiah and Jeremiah's words are given to help us turn to Him, let us not waste them but apply them diligently in the assurance of help to grow and bear fruit pleasing to the Husbandman who has cultivated the true vine and now works with those joined to Him that they may grow in His likeness.

M.C.S.

**“LOSE NOT THOSE THINGS  
WHICH WE HAVE WROUGHT”**

In the Second Epistle of John, we are given a warning by John:

“Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.”

II John v. 8

The word “look” means to beware, to perceive, or to take heed. Our warning, then, is to beware not to lose those things which we have wrought, or worked for. We all have worked for things throughout our lives, which we would not like to lose! But in this case, the “full reward” would be the attainment of God’s Kingdom.

From the time that we were called by God, we have wrought a work. That work has been to walk in God’s commandments, as seen in the words of John:

“And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.”

II John v. 6

Each and every day we are tempted in one form or another, and each day we hope to gain knowledge and experience from that tribulation. But if we give up our fight against the flesh, then all the work which has been wrought up to that point would be for naught. The work which has been accomplished is not just our own:

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

I Corinthians 6:19-20

And, to continue that thought:

“For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord’s freeman: likewise also he that is called being free, is Christ’s servant.

Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.”

I Corinthians 7:22-24

The Lord Jesus has paid the price for our lives, and it was part of His work which He wrought. Jesus had His own work, just like our own, in that He had to fight His flesh every day; but His work

was that much greater. He had to fulfill with all righteousness, the Word of God, so that all God's faithful could have hope of the promised Kingdom. He gave His own body as a sacrifice to God, so that our sins could be atoned for. This is the price with which we have been bought. This is the work which Jesus wrought!

It is for this reason that we should struggle each day (our work) to defeat our flesh, and to show our appreciation of God's gifts: His Word, and His Word made flesh - His Son:

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth."

1 John 5:3-6

Jesus' words which spoke of Himself, and the work which He wrought, also apply to ourselves:

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." John 9:4

Much like Jesus, we must work the works which God has given us, in order to attempt to secure a hope of the **full reward** promised by God to His faithful followers. As part of the full reward, we must try not to focus on the works of the world; but rather on those things which can lead us to the hope of salvation:

"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."

John 6:27

The familiar words from Romans show us why we should continue in those things which we have wrought:

"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

It is through our tribulations that we can grow in the ways of God. When we fail during our work, as long as we repent and return to that which we have wrought, we still have hope because of the work which Jesus wrought. We must strive to demonstrate our faith in God each day, by showing our thanks and appreciation for all that He has provided for us. We do this by striving to continue in the work we have already wrought, recognizing it is a life's work, if we hope to attain the full reward.

E.J.M.

## SEPARATION - APPLICATION OF THE SPIRIT

(Part 2 Continued from last month)

To continue with our study of the biblical ordinance of separation and the spirit of love within it, we have followed Israel as they entered into the promised inheritance under the leadership of Joshua. There, they chafed at the imposed separation which was provided to keep them a holy people and wanted instead to be like those around them - the alien nations who knew not God. From time to time, God sent these various nations as punishment against them for their waywardness:

“...ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land;  
ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed  
my voice: why have ye done this?

Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before  
you but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods  
shall be a snare unto you.” Judges 2:2-3

When they cried unto the Lord for deliverance from these persecutors, He was merciful and sent them a judge to guide them back to His precepts and help them drive out the oppressors from their land. Yet as human nature does - they in time would forget the torment of their previous oppression and seek once again to unite themselves to their heathen neighbors - turning their back once again

upon their long suffering Father. While there was a godly judge amongst them, they were obedient, but after his death would then lapse back into their former idolatrous ways. We are told that after Joshua's death:

“And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:

And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.”

Judges 2:10-12

As an example of the value of separation, He had left them with His law - ordinances to guide them in every aspect of their daily life, that they may be a holy people - a different people, and at one with Him. For example, under the law were dietary guidelines outlining that they must eat only those animals which were classified as “clean” - those that parted the hoof and chewed the cud (not that every creature that God had created was not good in His sight), but that his people may learn the deeper spiritual meaning He was attempting to teach. That they may be sure footed in their spiritual walk before him, and as those animals which chewed the cud, take time to meditate and ponder carefully every word that proceeded from their mouths. Such small details were imbedded in every law given - not that they were to be done mindlessly from habit, but with thoughtful care, thinking about what each was to teach the man of God.

Now settled in the land, having refused His holy protection of separation, they continued to defile themselves by serving the idols worshipped by their alien neighbors and refusing to hearken unto the prophets God sent to them for help and correction. Finally they were given up into captivity into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon who carried them away as slaves to serve in his land, leaving the city of Jerusalem and their way of life in ruins. They were no longer the nation of Israel, an independent people with God as their king.

This was their lot, under the dominion of Babylon then later successive world conquerors until at the time of the Roman occupation, the Light of their Salvation was born in Bethlehem - God's Son as promised who would become a Savior and Redeemer

for His people - again another example of Gods mercy and longsuffering so undeserved. Here was the One promised who was the type of the sacrifices provided under the law to remove sin - an obedient, faithful man of God - the perfect standard as taught by the spirit of the law. This is who the law had been teaching of - this is how they should have patterned their own living in order to be acceptable before the Lord. He was sent in order to show them the living word of God!

As Jesus gathered a group of disciples around Him, His intention was to preach and teach the spirit of the law to them and all who would hear - not the rote traditions that had been created by men, but to show forth the true love of the Father for those that are His and the hope of eternal life He had extended from the very beginning. This separation necessary unto the Father was again evident as He prayed for His disciples and the work that would lie ahead of them after His death:

“For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.”

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me: for they are thine.

I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

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.

John 17:8-9,14-16

And in a reference to those in the years yet to come, who would believe on God the Father and His Son through the work of these disciples, Jesus goes on to pray:

“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou has sent me.”

John 17:20-21

Here is God’s love and the hope extended to mankind: reiterated again - that in mercy God had provided an escape from death for all those who believe on His precepts through the name of His Son, the Lord Jesus. It all comes back to God’s word and purpose - to separate a people from the world who will hear His

voice and endeavor to apply His word in their living - while living among those in the world who do not heed or comprehend that word.

Paul in this same spirit of love and separation writes to his Corinthian brethren saying:

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

And will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

II Corinthians 6:14-18

To be “unequally yoked” with one of another kind, would be a familiar concept in their agricultural society. As they worked to plant crops, it would be at cross purposes to yoke a slow, heavy, sure-footed ox with a young, flighty, quick stepping horse. Nothing would be accomplished as their gaits, strength and speed were so different. Yet to yoke two oxen together - slowly and surely a straight furrow would be ploughed. While to yoke together two quick stepping speedy horses to a wagon, would provide not only strength but a quick and efficient choice of transport. So too could they perceive the spiritual teaching within not yoking one’s life with another of a different or ungodly persuasion.

This spiritual aspect of separation gives no room for hostility, unkindness or lack of compassion towards one’s neighbors or fellow man, even though we may not be “spiritually” yoked together with them, as Paul reminds:

“Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Romans 12:17-18,20-21

If there was no contact but a total separation from the world, there would be no opportunity to show forth a faithful witness in one's living of the hope that lies within, to endeavor to walk after the example of Christ, as Peter explains further:

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."  
I Peter 2:11-12

To those without a true understanding of the power of love and care seen in the precept of "separation", it may seem as exclusive, harsh and unfriendly. Yet this was not God's intention. It was to be a loving hedge and protection spiritually surrounding His people -sealing them from the lusts and evil distractions of the fleshly world around them. Who while living in the world, but not adhering to its vices, endeavor to follow after His teachings of love, meekness and compassion to all their fellow man, while remaining devoted to serving only the Lord.

M.C.S.

## A BIBLE CLASS

### "SAUL'S DEATH"

Our Bible study concerns the discrepancy surrounding the record of Saul's death in battle as taken from the books of first and second Samuel. The record of Saul's death against the Philistines in battle is recorded in I Samuel:

"And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers. Then said Saul unto his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore

Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.

And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him.

So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armourbearer, and all his men, that same day together." I Samuel 31:3-6

A similar version of Saul's death is reported to David shortly after the battle by an Amalekite who claims he not only witnessed Saul's sons death, but mercifully took Saul's life himself - at his request:

"And the young man that told him (David) said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him.

And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I.

And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite.

He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me.

So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord." II Samuel 1:6-10

Saul had been persecuting David for years - hunting him down to kill him in jealousy and rage because David was to become king after him. With his enemy dead, did David rejoice and give thanks to this Amalekite? No, rather the reverse:

"Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him:

And they mourned, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword." II Samuel 1:11-12

Many times opportunities arose for David to kill Saul. Other men might have followed their fleshly impulses to take his life and end their persecution at his hand, yet, David was a man after God's own heart and would not raise his hand against one the Lord had anointed. He left it in God's hands to remove Saul in His own time and purpose, thus displaying a gentle spirit different from most men.

The Amalekites had been enemies to Israel for centuries and David had helped Saul by warring against them in times past.

It was common practice to loot the dead of their valuables on the battlefield after a victorious battle and so this Amalekite, recognizing Saul's body by his attire & crown, looted these items and brought them to David in hopes of currying favor, for Saul's hatred and persecution of David would be well known throughout Israel and its adjoining neighbors. He no doubt expected to be richly rewarded, not only for bringing the crown to David but more so for ending Saul's life (doing him a mercy in his thinking). He probably did not kill Saul, for this account differs from the record in II Samuel that Saul fell upon his own sword, but the Amalekite falsely claimed credit for the deed, hoping to gain prestige and create an advantage for himself before David. To another man unlike David, this may have worked, but he indicted himself in wrongdoing through his lie and paid for it with his life because David's spirit was respectful of Saul as the Lord's anointed:

“And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD's anointed? And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died. And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD's anointed.” I Samuel 1:14-16

## GOD — OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH

In the first verse of Psalm 46 David reminds us; “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

In these few pruned words of the Spirit, we have summarized for us the basis of our struggle and hope, the means by which we can come to know and realize the purpose of God to be accomplished. We must look to God as our only refuge and strength, we must seek God's very presence to help us in time of trouble.

This word “trouble” is the same word used as adversity, affliction, anguish, distress, tribulation, all of which may come to try our faith and test our dependence upon God.

In thinking upon the troubles we at times find ourselves in, we can perhaps be helped by considering the life of Joseph. His

was a life throughout which there was the revelation of God's working through him to achieve His purpose for Israel. It was a life, the example of which God has allowed to be recorded, that we might learn the instruction it teaches us, to help in our living.

It is possible for us who have known God's hand upon us, to question His presence, for it may seem to us at times that God is not watching over us as events take place contrary to the way we feel they should.

At such times it will be well to remember and reflect upon our brother Joseph, who during the course of his probation likewise had occasion to perhaps feel the same way. So it is by his example we can come to be reminded of how God works to guide His children and bring them ever closer to Him, even though the circumstances which beset them may not seem to be so.

Let us then consider Joseph's life, by going to Genesis chapter 37 verse 3 where we read:

"Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours."

How great must Israel's love have been for Joseph, for not only was he the son of his old age, but also the son of Rachel, for whom he laboured 14 years under Laban. It was because of Israel's love of Joseph, that Joseph's brothers' anger was turned against him, causing their mouths to speak evil towards him, causing them to hate him so that "they could not speak peaceably unto him." This coupled with the dream of which Joseph told his brothers, caused them to hate him even more, stirring up their envy so much so as to seek a means to remove him from their presence. To accomplish this end, we know his brothers conspired against him and cast him into a pit.

Can we imagine the torment and fear passing through the mind of Joseph, a mind which was nurtured in love and goodness, to now feel the hate from his own brothers and the injustice done against his innocence? Certainly no good, no love, could be envisioned by Joseph in his position, for the situation appeared hopeless. Yet, his situation was not at all in the hands of his brothers as he might have thought, but in the hands of God, who in working with Joseph was preparing him to carry out His will.

Joseph we know did not die in that pit, but according to the working of God was brought out and sold by his brothers into

slavery. Does this not speak to us of the mercy of God in working with His children, that He will not place on them more than they can bear. He is always leading and guiding their living through His purpose, even though one difficult circumstance may seem to lead to another.

It is easy and natural for the fleshly mind to reason when placed into hard trials and difficulties which at times come to test us, that there is no help from God. But let us remember the example of Joseph and God's undeniable working with him to help us at such times as these.

We have seen how Joseph was delivered from the pit, only to be placed in still another fearful situation. Certainly while on his way to Egypt, as a slave, he would have pondered the seemingly hopeless position he was in, the very real prospect of never seeing his father and partaking of the life he had once known. It must have been a grievous contemplation to Joseph, yet we read after he was sold into Egypt in Genesis 39 verse 2 that:

“...the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.”

We see that at no time was Joseph really alone, even though he may have felt such at times during his long and hard ordeal, for God was there to hold him up, a refuge to Joseph, giving strength to bring him on in the way God knew best.

Joseph would have recognized that God was with him, for he was made prosperous and delivered from the lonely position he was in, for it was even apparent to those around him as the third verse of chapter 39 tells us:

“And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand.”

For several years Joseph served in the Egyptian's house, a time during which he prospered and all seemed to be going well, until falsely accused by his master's wife, he was placed into prison.

How difficult it is when striving to do that which is right to be falsely accused. This was Joseph's situation, for he had resisted great wickedness in order to not sin, but his action seemed to bring only rebuke.

Here was another trial for Joseph to bear, a test to see if his fear of God was greater than the despair for his own flesh, to see if he would remember that God was with him and would help him if

he trusted in His mercy. God was there, for in verses 21 to 23 we read:

“But the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph’s hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.

The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper.

As Joseph was there in that prison, he surely must have suffered much but just as surely God was there to give blessing and to ease some of the oppression.

Are we not helped further by Joseph’s example to see more clearly how God works, that as trials come upon us, they are for a reason, a reason we may not be aware of at first, but still they come to work in us that which God knows and requires of us. Thus, after accomplishing their purpose they are lessened or removed.

We in our struggles to uphold the truth, have at times been falsely accused and caused to despair. We may be placed in situations which we feel are not right nor deserved, we may not know or understand initially why. Let us remember from Joseph’s example, however, that it is God who does know and in all things, no matter how hard they may seem to us, works only for good on our behalf.

Returning to Joseph in prison, we see how God allows good to be brought about but only in His time, a time given to work patience in those He draws to Himself.

Pharaoh’s chief butler and baker were also cast into prison with Joseph, and there dreamed dreams which they could not interpret. We read in verses 6 to 8 of chapter 40:

“And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad.

And he asked Pharaoh’s officers that were with him in the ward of his lord’s house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly today?

And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you.”

Joseph at this time would not have seen what further

significance there was in knowing the butler and the baker in prison, for it was in the working of God that after two years Pharaoh would dream his dream and the butler remembered Joseph's ability to interpret, which finally led to his release and the appointment as second ruler in the land.

How great was the mercy of God on Joseph's behalf, a love and care shown because Joseph's spirit was right, a spirit which had grown to understand the workings of God with him, a spirit which thus humbled itself, submitted and waited patiently and gave glory to God.

Can we see from Joseph's example the way in which God works? How He leads with purpose those who fear and thus strive to keep His word?

Can we see also the closeness God reveals in fashioning those that are His?

We are told, Joseph was 30 years old when he stood before Pharaoh, 13 years had past, years which had seen him suffer greatly, years which were used by God to fashion Joseph as the means of deliverance for His people Israel from the famine God's words had spoken of. In verse 46 of Genesis 41 we read:

"And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt."

Joseph was set free! It was seven years after Joseph's freedom that God's word came true:

"And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended.

And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread." Gen. 41:53-54

All through those seven years God's word had tried Joseph, for he was free, he could have easily returned to see his father Israel, but no, he heeded the word of God, submitted to it, for he knew God's purpose in sending him and trusted in that hope.

We might ask ourselves could we have done the same as Joseph, placed in his position? For our position today though different, is much the same, for God has a purpose with us, for we too are required to serve God and witness to Him in our living, to

wait patiently upon His will, to submit to His word which comes to try us, just as it did to Joseph.

We must then when difficult struggles and trials arise in our living, keep Joseph's example in mind, remember his fear and trust in God's mercy to help us, recognizing that whatever circumstance we are in, God is there with us, fashioning us according to His purpose.

### SIGNS OF HIS COMING

**"Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers  
of pleasures more than lovers of God."  
II Timothy 3:4**

Paul with the above words, conveyed to Timothy what mankind would become in the last days. It was an accurate prediction of what we see today in much of the world. It is the liberal bent pervading society today that is leading mankind down the path towards destruction by overturning the age-old practices of knowing right from wrong.

We see the growth of liberal leaders and their liberal followers instituting new behaviors and opinions as they willingly discard traditional values. A recent article by the editor of a small town newspaper in Tawas City, Michigan brings this into striking focus in regard to the liberalization of America. Some comments from this editorial follow:

"We take money from those who work hard for it and give it to those who don't want to work."

"We still have freedom of speech, but only if we are being politically correct."

"Parenting has been replaced with Ritalin and video games."

"The land of opportunity is now the land of handouts".

"You can have pornography on TV or the internet, but you better not have the Ten Commandments in public places."

"We have eliminated all criminals in America; they are now called sick people."

"We can use a human fetus for medical research, but it's wrong to use an animal."

"We are unable to close our border with Mexico, but have no problem protecting the 38th parallel in Korea."

"If you protest against President Obama's policies you're a terrorist, but if you burn an American flag or George Bush in effigy, it was your first amendment right."

"If we dislike a black person we're a racist and if a black dislikes whites, it's their first amendment right."

"The government spends millions to rehabilitate criminals and they do almost nothing for the victims of their crime."

"In public schools you can teach that homosexuality is ok., but you better not use the word God in the process."

"You can kill an unborn child (through abortion), but it's wrong to execute a mass murderer."

"If we lie to Congress it's a felony and if the Congress lies to us, its just politics."

We see from the above examples, and there are many more, how a double standard has replaced the traditional values of old. Such is the situation found not only in America today, but also throughout the world, as men trust in their own liberal ideology and forsake the word of God.

We await the return of the Lord Jesus to set the world - which man has corrupted - back on its firm and righteous foundation.

As the warmer weather has returned, we marvel at the rebirth from the ground, which reminds us of God's unchanging purpose with His creation. We take strength and encouragement from the knowledge of God's word regarding His promise of resurrection from death to everlasting life for those found acceptable. This should instill in us the godly fear necessary to guide our living in the Truth's way and in the fellowship we share. May we as brethren and sisters struggle honestly in work and deed, one with another, in the sight of our most merciful Father.

H.C.S.

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS FOR JUNE 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

After a fairly cold winter, we look forward to the warm days of spring as it signals the rebirth of God's creation. The various seasons have their meaning to those sensitive to the handiwork of God, reminding us of the unchangeableness of the Almighty. We can take solace and hope in the power of God to fulfil His Word.

Our thoughts and prayers are very much with our like-minded brethren in our struggle Zion-ward. May we be helped to overcome in the great mercy of God.

M.C.S.

MANCHESTER

Sunday: Breaking of Bread 11:30 am

Thursday: Bible Class 2:00 pm

The weeks come and go and some of us across the seas have various bouts of illness and other maladies. What a comfort it is to us all, as we think of one another, showing prayerful concern.

And in Heaven we have a Father looking down in loving grace, and we experience a wonderful provision.

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

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