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The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of
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A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

"Take heed ye be not deceived"

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

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CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH

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All Communications

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At the the Table of the Lord

How much is revealed in all that was given by God to Moses upon Mount Sinai ! In this we can discern the purpose of God and the means whereby man may become associated with that purpose. His grace shines out, bringing to the faithful mind the desire to serve the Almighty in loving gratitude.

But how may we serve Him ? Are we shown by what was required for Aaron and his sons before they could enter into their work—which is a type of the great work and everlasting service to which we are called ? Aaron and his sons were to be consecrated by a procedure given by God before they were allowed to approach unto His altar to serve. Must there be in our probation a process working continually which will consecrate us to the service now and to the greater work with the Lord Jesus when He comes ? Only by this process can we become acceptable.

To be consecrated—the word has the thought of a “ filling up,” as the hands in service. The same word is found in Exodus 25 : 7, where it is translated “ set in,” speaking of the materials brought by those who *willingly* offered from the heart for the building and service of the house of God. “ Onyx stones and stones to be *set* in the ephod, and in the breastplate.” The use of the word here gives an insight into what the consecration really means. A selection of certain people, a willing people, having been cut and polished to *fit* into the appointed places upon the heart of the high priest, are—because of being “ set in ”—to reflect the light which shines upon them, all to the glory of God.

Let us then review this process of consecration, by which Aaron and his sons were “ set into ” their appointed offices, remembering that these things are given for *our* instruction and exhortation by the Spirit. We try to imagine the minds of those who were to be priests as they were prepared for their work. How meticulously they would follow the instructions of Moses, careful not to deviate in any way, knowing that any alteration would mean the spoiling of their work. It is then so important that *our* mind be the same, eager to serve the Creator, but with restraint and the awareness that naturally we are not fit to approach : so it must be with discernment, striving to be right in every detail that we offend not. It is a process and how important each step, bringing us ever closer to the mind that will appreciate the honour and holiness of the service.

The Process of Consecration

The first step (Leviticus 8 : 6) was a washing with water of those who were called to serve—a cleansing of the flesh before all the congregation. For ourselves this is first accomplished by baptism, but after that there needs to be a daily, a constant cleansing from all that defiles.

The Lord Jesus in instructing His apostles as recorded in John 13, washed their feet, showing them that their walk must be clean and that only through His washing could it be accomplished. In verse 8, replying to Peter the Lord Jesus said, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." And then he continues to instruct His apostles how they must follow His example, and wash each other's feet, reaching out to help prevent uncleanness from creeping in. We are indeed our brother's keeper and by example and ministration we are to "wash" each other. It is a part of our becoming consecrated to the end ordained by a merciful Creator.

The Clothing

Next, Aaron the high priest, then later his sons, were clothed with their garments, bringing to the faithful mind the figure of the great High Priest, the Lord Jesus. It was He who was first prepared and consecrated and then through Him those who were the family of God.

These garments were significant in their fashioning—materials and colouring were to keep before the mind all that with which faithful servants must clothe themselves. In Exodus 28 v. 2, we read the instruction to Moses :

"Thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty."

The clothing was to teach of the glory and beauty which is of God when the Lord Jesus as *the* High Priest is united to and clothed with those who because of their consecration will become His garments, everlastingly bound to Him. We are now to serve in a way which will glorify and appear beautiful to Him. Only as we reflect the glory and beauty of Him can this be done.

The Anointing

The third step in the process of consecration involved the anointing of the high priest. The holy oil was poured on Aaron's head and in this way he was shown to be suitable for his high office. The holy oil was a symbol of the holy power of God which was to direct and help him in all his work. From the head the fragrant oil descended enveloping all the garments right down to the skirt. In this way it is seen Christ was to have the pre-eminence and then through Him others might receive the blessing—a blessing which is experienced now in the true family of God and one which is to have an eternal fulfilment when the great high priest returns as expressed in the Psalm—

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity !

It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments

. . . . For there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." (Psalm 133).

With the solemnity and great significance of consecration before them, the minds of Aaron and his sons would respond with an awe-filled awareness that they, human creatures, should have been called to such holiness. We, too, are to constantly strive for this wonder, for with it comes the overwhelming sense of unfitness and keener appreciation of the One who propitiated. What then is the reaction to this awareness? Is it not a desire to offer ourselves up to Him who has extended this mercy?

Sacrifice Necessary

Thus the next act in the consecration was the offering of sacrifices. First, as always, the *sin offering*—wherein the one offering acknowledges that our nature is naturally evil and not to be tolerated by God, except by the offering made by His Son. How significant, too, that in each of these offerings, the hands of those offering were laid upon the head of the offering, acknowledging sin and an identification of the offerer with *the head*.

After the sin offering came the *burnt offering*—signifying as it does the desire to join with the head in allowing the fire of the Spirit to burn away all the lusts of the flesh—all of which results in a sweet savour to God. How important it is that we willingly permit the Spirit to burn away the flesh, painful as it may prove. But how are we allowing it to be consumed? Grudgingly, reluctantly, only after trying in many ways to avoid doing so? Or do we answer with a grateful heart, rejoicing at the exhibition of God's hand? Are we then allowing the burning to progress, feeling the love of God and responding in love?

Finally the *ram of consecration* was offered and its blood put upon the ear, the hand, and the foot, signifying the necessity that the life of the Lord Jesus stimulates and shows forth in all that enters our mind, governing our deeds and our walk. What an important aspect, that all is brought to conform to the perfect example of the One who has so faithfully served and is now serving in the presence of the Father. The heart must enlarge in gratitude and the desire then will be to fill our hands, offering all the best of our time, ability, and means, indeed all our living to please our Father.

With each step in the ceremony of consecration, the mind becomes more inspired by the contemplation of the love and mercy shown and thus is prepared for what is next done—a sprinkling with

anointing oil and with the blood taken from the altar. Does it show that here is the working of the Spirit in one who earnestly strives to partake of and become washed by the blood, the life of the Son of God?

Have we not felt, tangibly, the operation of the Spirit in our lives? And is it bringing us to partake more fully of Jesus' life? We are to remember that the company with the Lamb on Mount Zion have come out of "great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God and *serve* him day and night in his temple . . ." (*Revelation 7 : 14, 15*).

A Fellowshiping

The Spirit tells us next of the partaking of the flesh of the sacrifices by those who have allowed the Spirit to lead them through this process of consecration. As the words of Exodus 29 : 33 tells us :

"They shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them : but a stranger shall not eat thereof, because they are holy."

What joy would be felt and yet what soberness in this partaking together of these holy things, just as we are to feel in being permitted to eat of the Bread and Wine at the Table of the Lord. Is there a strength, a renewing of our determination to keep our vows, a rejoicing in the unity found only at the *true* Table? Do we approach to partake of these emblems, aware of the holiness of the privilege and striving more and more to become truly *set in*, consecrated to a greater measure each day?

The Separation

And so finally the requirements of those being consecrated was a complete separation for a period of seven days for they were not to go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. Is this not to show us that the consecration to the service is to continue for a complete cycle of time, indeed a whole lifetime of probation? How important then that we never leave the house of God, lest our consecration be spoiled. As the words of the Spirit tell us :

"Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation day and night seven days, and keep the charge of the Lord, that ye die not." (*Leviticus 8 : 35*).

That ye die not! How dreadful the consequence of leaving the house—DEATH. Shall we heed the warning? The Spirit speaking through Ezekiel in showing to His people the glory of His house,

when God will dwell among His people, describes those who are permitted to serve then :—

“ *But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord God: They shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge.*” (Ezekiel 44 : 15, 16).

How wonderful this prospect ! Can we fail now to keep the charge : for the time of our consecration is nearly fulfilled ? Are our sacrifices prepared, our lives in order—the washing, the clothing, the sprinkling—that we may be sanctified for the work now to which we have been called ?

For Moses said :

“ *This is the thing which the Lord commanded that we should do : and the glory of the Lord shall appear unto you.*” (Leviticus 9 : 6).

J. A. DeF.



Remember Ye the Law of Moses My Servant

“ **Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.**” (Exodus 20, v. 3)

Why should a nation so richly blessed want any other gods than the One whose power they saw at Sinai, and who so recently had delivered them from bondage ?—who had defeated and humiliated the mighty enemy, and had now placed them beyond the reach of cruel oppression ? The command in such circumstances would seem superfluous, but this could not be the case, for it was God-given. It is wise to remember the time and circumstance ; how the hearts of the people, though awed, would be full of gratitude in witnessing the presence of God, whose working hitherto had been unseen. Hearts would be bound to God in gratitude, the very essence of the purpose of God. The human heart, however, is a fickle thing, and can soon be captivated by other emotions. God knew this, so gave this first commandment as an anchor of the heart and mind. When in subsequent times, the command was recited, the circumstances would flash upon the mind of those present at Sinai. They would be constrained to tell their children and their children's children of the wonder. Young minds would be enrapt by the account, and carry something of the impression into manhood, whilst they said the words of the first command. Later generations were permitted to receive the same blessing through the written record, wonderfully preserved throughout all generations so that even in these far-off days of Gentile times, present Israel may be blessed.

Gratitude, however, soon leaves the human heart. In human relations it is many times painfully observed how gifts, at first appreciated, later become accepted as a matter of right. If the kindness is withdrawn, then resentment is caused. This not only shows how by nature the heart is fickle, but is, as the prophet says, "desperately wicked." The only way of taming such an impulsive thing as the human heart, is by trial : giving it a law to keep, and allowing experiences to prove the wisdom of the law. This is the way of God, and the first law given was designed to stabilise the fickle and wandering heart :—

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

The wisdom of this law is seen more and more in the course of the history of the children of Israel. Like all the people of God, their greatest danger was not an occasional breach of the law through weakness, but the moving of the heart completely away from God. In this besetting tendency another weakness of the human heart is exposed—its subtlety. Like the serpent, it can twist and turn, metaphorically of course, until the plain and simple truth is distorted out of recognition, and the desired object of the heart is obtained. It was so in the beginning. The arguments of the serpent were not flat denials of God, but subtle reasonings, plausible to the unwary, and having an appearance of wisdom. Acceptance of such specious reasonings by the first parents caused their death ! This should be sufficient warning for all time of the dreadfulness of subtlety in the sight of God,—of deviation from the simplicity of His Truth. God's children are not only called upon to speak the Truth, but to eschew the subtle methods of the Gentiles : not only to be honest with one another, but transparently honest, avoiding the cunning and scheming which are the fruits of subtlety.

This wretched quality of the human heart is seen in its worst form when affection for God diminishes. Attracted by the liberty and licence "enjoyed" by surrounding people, the heart is pierced with a gloomy reflection : "Need we be so particular ?" Once that shaft has really entered the heart, subtlety starts its dreadful work. Soliloquising, the heart continues : "Why, these other people seem very kind and affable, in some ways more kind than my brethren. And they are religious too. Surely it cannot be that such likeable people are destined to the blackness and darkness of an eternal grave !" Subtlety has damaged such a heart as effectively as pneumonia or rheumatic fever does the physical heart. The hopelessness of human life apart from God prevents most hearts straightly denying God. Subtlety, like the serpent, by devious methods, leads the heart to believe they can find a more obliging God ; one who is not so particular, and will allow the heart to please itself. And so

man in his folly creates a God of his own, which he is deceived into believing is the true God. The nations surrounding Israel all had their gods, a potent attraction to the fleshy heart. Not that there was any special wisdom associated with these gods, (for how could there be?), but their attraction was that they offered the human heart what it wanted. Baal was never known for any superb laws regulating life; for wisdom transcending any upon earth. His chief merit was that he allowed his dupes to have "a good time," or at least what appeared as a good time. His followers never seemed to realise that he allowed fightings, wars, cruelties, abominations that were more beastly than the beasts, and above all, required their children to be sacrificed on the fire. All these dreadful consequences of following Baal did not matter, *if* the heart got what it wanted. How kind God was when these matters are reviewed in giving the first command:—

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

Christendom too has its gods many. This would be denied by "Christians." But the god of the Roman Catholic is a very different god than the god of, say, the Baptists. His teaching is different, at least judging by what these two gods require their followers to believe and practice. There is one significant fact about all these gods of the many sects of Christendom—they allow, more or less, their followers to please themselves. Whilst creeds and beliefs differ, and standards of conduct vary, personal preference is sufficiently accommodated by the thesis "we cannot judge," a poison which has now stupified all, including those claiming to be the brethren of Christ. Hence the pattern of life in Christendom is little different from that in Egypt and other nations contemporary with Israel. Wars, rumours of wars, unrest and strife prevail. Abominations, dressed up (or undressed!) to appeal to the sensual, pollute their life. Their children are brought up with a degree of conventional respectability, but ultimately to be sacrificed on the fire of war—to their gods. For what war have "Christian" nations not waged, that has not been on behalf of their gods? History truly repeats itself, gloomily and frightfully. The pattern does not alter because man will not listen to the God of Israel and enjoy His kindness. What untold benefit there is contained in the first command given to Israel at Sinai, when the history of the nations is reviewed. The world is like Athens in the days of Paul. His remarkable words convey a powerful sentiment—"Oh, that man would turn from all this folly of serving many gods."

"I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious (deisidiamonesterous)." (Acts 17, v. 22).

"Too superstitious," or too much followers of "demons" (the actual word will be noted in the original).

The Apostle's appeal was that men—

“*Should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us. For in him we live, and move and have our being.*”

How refreshing is the conclusion of the Apostle's address :—

“*And the times of this ignorance God winked at: but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent:*

Because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained: whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

How beautiful and powerful appears the commentary of the Apostle on the present world, still obsessed with telling or hearing some new thing, when considered against the all-wise and kindly provision of God in His first command to Israel :—

“*Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*”

(*To be continued*)



“**Contending for the Faith once delivered unto the Saints**”

Since the Creation there has been a tendency in human nature to depart from the One Truth, and follow natural desires. To keep the Truth needs effort; often painful effort in the struggle with strong human impulses. To give way and leave the Truth, whilst arguing that one is still serving God, is alluringly easy. The history of the Truth as contained in the word of God is a history of this conflict, with the victory as far as numbers are concerned generally going to those who desire to please self but argue they are still serving God.

The lesson which is emphasised throughout the Word is that departure from *upholding* the Law of God in any particular brings *departure from God*. Failure to observe the Law through weakness is forgiven through the mercy of God where there is repentance. For the one however who alters the Law in any particular, and after being told of his wrong, persists, there is no hope. He loses fellowship with God. He becomes ‘without God.’

In keeping with this Israel were warned :

“*What thing soever I command you, observe to do it; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.*” (Deut. 4 v. 32).

“*Cursed (condemned) be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them.*” (Deut. 27 v. 26).

Those coming after Israel in the Truth, those in Christ, are similarly told :

“Whoso transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.” (2 John v. 9).

The servants of God have always been required to separate themselves from those who alter divine Law to suit their own ends. In the very early days of the world’s history there is more than a hint of this after Abel had been slain, and Seth was born.

“Then began men to call themselves by the name of the Lord.”
(Margin. Gen. 4 v. 26).

Before this time such distinction was not necessary. It only became necessary for God’s true servants to assume a name when differentiation was imperative because of departure by some from the Law of God.

The same separation is seen in the days of the Apostles :

“If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to the wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness . . . from such withdraw thyself.”
(I. Tim. 6 vv. 3/5).

Separation has never been required to vindicate individuals. It is commanded to preserve the Truth inviolate in the One Body.

In the Last Days

The latter-day history of the Truth has been no different from the former. Men have arisen who for different reasons have sought to alter the Law of God. Division has ensued, causing the enemies of the Truth to blaspheme ; but no other way is possible of preserving *the* Truth in the One Body. This way is not of man’s devising. It is divinely required.

“Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean ; and I will receive you.”
(2 Cor. 6 v. 17).

When the people of the Lord neglect the separation commanded, God departs from them. Israel discovered this to their hurt on more than one occasion. They were defeated by their enemies because God was not with them. God returned to them, received them, only when they forsook their evil ways, and showed by words that they would uphold His Law. Never has God permitted any diminishing or altering of His Law which is the expression of His mind. If it had been otherwise then through the generations that have passed *the* Truth would have been completely lost. God knew this and His wisdom glistens as a kindly and beckoning light when in His law He requires care in every detail, lest little by little His people be lost and His Truth perish from the earth.

The divisions which have occurred in the past hundred years have been represented by the careless in divine things as unnecessary and wicked ; as only resulting from someone desiring to gain a following. " Why can't we remain united without so much hair splitting ? "—has been the continual cry of those who have been more concerned with preserving numbers than with all the vital aspects of divine Law. The literature of the times when divisions occurred shows this most clearly. In 1864, 1873, 1884, 1897, 1917-23, 1933 the story was the same. Generally the large majority, careless about some detail of divine Law, criticised those who stood for the whole Law as desiring to create a following of their own. In 1923 the accusation was that Clapham desired to take the lead from Birmingham ; in 1933 that Nottingham wished to filch it from Clapham. Such accusations are only made to cloud the issue and are quite irrelevant. The vital consideration is—where is the Law of God being defended against any alteration to suit human desires ?

The Division of 1954

If time is allowed to go on and the present attention now devoted to personalities goes, then the issue in this division will be seen clearly as concerning an attempted alteration to divine Law :

That brethren's work could be *condemned ecclesially* ' as a work of evil ' without the preliminary steps being taken as commanded by Christ in Matthew 18.

Even supposing that those condemned by the Resolution were guilty, the Law of Christ still requires that they should be ' seen ' first alone and then with witnesses and only upon their refusal ' to hear ' should the matter have been brought before the Ecclesia. Instead of this the law was set aside even to the extent that those condemned were neither told they were offenders nor advised of the meeting, and although they attended were not permitted to ask any questions or speak in their own defence. Never before in the history of the Truth has such action been taken, and understandably so when it is seen how much it was opposed in spirit and letter to the Law of Christ.

In every division those guilty of altering God's law never confess this. They vehemently profess otherwise. Perusal of the history of the divisions shows in every case that the attempted alteration is done behind a screen, carefully fabricated of pious declarations, but containing some decidedly false teaching. The two are so skilfully and subtly interwoven that the majority cannot see through the ' screen ' ; their eyes are blinded to what is really taking place—*the alteration by man of a divine Law*. The ' screen ' used in the 1954 division was no different in pattern from previous ones. There were the pious declarations that a number of brethren and sisters had been engaged in an evil work ; that this ought to be

ended as the Word condemns "striving and contention over vain, hurtful and unprofitable matters as being contrary to the Spirit of Christ and leading only to schism in the body." The quotation is from the Nottingham Resolution. What could sound better? The 'screen' had every appearance of righteousness, but interwoven in it there was a dreadfully false doctrine, not detected by the unwary.

To make it appear that Christ's Law in Matthew 18 was not being trampled under foot those responsible for drafting the Resolution said, "We are not bringing a charge!" Brethren were condemned by the Resolution as guilty of 'a work of evil' at the same time as they were told that no charge was being made! What subtlety and vain deceit, but so carefully woven into the 'screen' that it was not perceived by the majority.

When certain called for the microscope of the Spirit to examine this they were accused of being contentious, low and evil. One Nottingham Arranging Bro. promised he would examine the matter and then within a day or two refused either to examine it or discuss it. As the 'screen' is carefully examined, the pious declarations for a moment placed on one side, the threads of a new pernicious doctrine are exposed.

The 'Non-responsibility of the evil worker'

"That a brother's work can be condemned without making a charge against him and so having to deal with him according to the Law in Matthew 18.

Nottingham for certain reasons found themselves having to defend this *strange new doctrine*.

The brethren condemned by Nottingham had been trying to bring about a vital reconciliation with one in Nottingham. The more they tried the more that one seemed incommoded. They must be silenced. The Law of Christ was disregarded when the Nottingham Ecclesia was inveigled into passing a Resolution condemning these brethren under the pretext that no charge was being made. When it was pointed out that Christ's Law had been broken then refuge was sought in the new teaching that 'a work of evil' can be condemned without condemning the worker. As always happens first an evil is condoned then later defended. The following quotation from a recent writing from Nottingham shows this:—

"How blind not to see that evil can be meddled with before one becomes an evildoer. Was Moses an evildoer? The action of striking the rock was evil, and he was punished, but did he strike it with an evil motive? The same applies to Peter when he denied Christ, would you dare to say, Peter and Moses were evil men? So when this work began we could not, dare not believe the motive was evil, but what since?"

Here the false doctrine is cleverly concealed which will deceive those who are not prepared to "prove all things."

The question posed by the writer which has an appearance of establishing truth is : " Were Moses and Peter evil men ? " The answer of course is ' No, ' from which it is assumed that only their evil works were condemned and not themselves. But is this true ?

The question overlooks the simple fact that faithful men committed evil, repented, and were forgiven. The suggestion that only the works of Moses and Peter were condemned, and not themselves, is in direct opposition to the divine record. If they repented they must have been previously condemned. There is no need of repentance by a brother if there is no condemnation of him. Moses must have repented otherwise he would not have been forgiven. Certainly he was punished, as acknowledged by the producer of the new doctrine. It should be remembered that God never punishes the guiltless. There is no doubt also that Peter repented for he " wept bitterly. " Clearly, from these scriptural examples it could never be said that a brother's evil work could be condemned without any condemnation of the brother, and the writer of the foregoing must have been hard pressed to use such in defence of the new doctrine.

Responsibility Irrespective of Motive

This new doctrine also implies that before a brother who has committed a ' work of evil ' can be condemned *it must be established that his motives are evil.* Where in the Word of God is there any such suggestion ? If a faithful brother commits evil, then at that time *he is evil,* and will remain so unless he repents. David was faithful to the extent he could be described as a " man after God's own heart. " He sinned, or in other words was guilty of an evil work. He was condemned to the extent that the sword was never to depart from his house. David would have remained evil had he not repented. His repentance was, however, sincere and profound and God forgave him. The suggestion that he was not condemned for an evil work because in the final sense he was not an ' evildoer ' is dreadful and is completely opposed to the divine record.

The Law of Moses clearly shows that a ' work of evil ' can be committed with pure motives and yet both the work and the worker were condemned. This is seen in the case of the priests, rulers and people when they sinned through ignorance. Ignorance would preclude the possibility of any evil motives : nevertheless the Law shows that when the work of evil was brought to the light not only was the work to be condemned but also the brother responsible for the work. Let those who are deceived by the new doctrine of the *non-responsibility of the evil worker* ponder this part of the Law :

" *When a ruler hath sinned, and done somewhat through ignorance*

against any of the commandments of the Lord his God concerning things which should not be done, and is guilty

Or if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge . . . He shall lay his hand upon the head of the goat, and kill it . . . it is a sin offering . . .

And the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.” (Leviticus 4 vv. 22/26).

The Law shows that the new doctrine, namely that pureness of motive delivers a sinner from condemnation, is false. Nowhere in the Word is there any support for such a notion.

If it had first to be ascertained whether a brother who transgressed (which is the scriptural word for doing ‘a work of evil’) had pure motives before Christ’s Law could be carried out, what confusion there would be. For who amongst men can read the heart of the offender? No, the new doctrine is strange, it is false, and is opposed to the simplicity of the Truth in Christ. Faithful brethren will shun it as evil. Neither will they partake of it by fellowshiping it.

If the transgression of Nottingham remains unchallenged then in future before an ‘offender’ can be dealt with according to the Law in Matthew 18, it will have to be decided whether his motives be good or evil. *Does it mean that if the Arranging Brethren decide his motives are good then without any advice to the ‘offender’ the Ecclesia will be called upon to condemn his work, but not the brother himself?*

The brother could not be called upon to repent because he has not been accused and presumably would continue in fellowship without any expressed change of mind. The practical results of this new doctrine show how confusing and wicked it is: how contrary to the Spirit of the Word that *a brother is always responsible for his actions whether they be good or bad*. The Lord Jesus said in this connection:

“Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be . . .

(and)

I will give unto every one of you according to your works.”

(Revelation 22 : 12 and 2 : 23).

May Nottingham and those with them look at the ‘screen’ Nottingham has placed around themselves to cover up the setting aside of divine Law and perceive the error which destroys the Truth. The only reason the Minority have withdrawn is in defence of divine Law, in obedience to the command:

“If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . from such withdraw thyself.” (I Timothy 6, vv. 3/5).

W.V.B.

The Signs of the Times

“ And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them and to purge, and to make white, even to the time of the end.”

(Daniel 11 v. 35).

The faithful of all generations would recognise that this prophecy would be fulfilled at the time of the end. As in many signs there have been fulfilments but at the very end then a great and final fulfilment is to be expected.

In looking back over the history of the Truth brethren and sisters would see the dreadful effects when men of understanding fell, as in the case of Hymenaeus and Alexander and also Phygellus and Hermogenes in the days of the apostles.

The history of the apostacy is the history of men of understanding falling, “ speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.”

Now, as the end comes critically near are the words of the prophet receiving their final fulfilment and uttering a grave warning? It is instructive to consider the warning—

“ Some of them of understanding shall fall, to try by them, to purge and make white.” (Daniel 11 v. 35).

By this means it is evident that the Body is to be refined and cleansed of those who would defile it: those having a form of godliness but whose power of judgment is surrendered to others. In each division there is always some evidence of this, but have we seen a sign which speaks with greater force than ever before? To most this will have brought pain, but comfort will be found in realising that it is by this means that the Body is to be tried and purged and made white.

J.H.W.

News from the Ecclesias

Beeston (Notts.).—Adult School Room, Acacia Walk, Beeston.

Sundays : Breaking of Bread, 11 a.m. ; Sunday School, 2.45 p.m. ; Bible Class, 3.45 p.m.

Thursday : 7.45 p.m.

On April 23rd we had our first lecture since the establishment of our Ecclesia at Beeston, five strangers being present. It is the desire of all here to press on with the work, holding fast to that which we have received, endeavouring to be found working diligently in the Master's service.

We are pleased to report that Sidney and Lilian Elston having had the courage to come out from the darkness met with us at the true Table of the Lord on May 8th and now rejoice in the Light. Also L. E. Brewer having had satisfactory interviews was received into fellowship on the same day.

We have had with us this month Brethren Butterfield and Watkiss who ministered to us. We thank them for their help.

We hope (God willing) to hold our Fraternal Gathering on May 30th. R.G.

Criccieth.—Breaking of Bread, 11.30 a.m. ; Bible Class, 3 p.m.

We have been much helped and encouraged by the visit of Brother and Sister Butterfield. It has indeed been a time of refreshing—and at a time of sadness when it has been fully appreciated.

Plans have been discussed for the work and we feel we are being guided—since there are indications of some interest locally in the Word.

We are now looking forward to the visits of the brethren and sisters during the summer. *per J.H.W.*

Eden, New York.—Grange Hall, Church Street. Sundays : Breaking of Bread, 11.15 a.m. ; Sunday School, 10 a.m. ; Revelation Study, 1.30 p.m. Bible Class : Mid-week alternately in Fredonia and Hamburg.

We rejoice in the benefit of the recent sojourn in England, and in the blessing of safe return. If the Father wills, further personal contacts are soon to take place.

The developments of the past two years present a sobering reason for contemplation, for the sifting has been on a large scale and accomplished with speed. How true a sign that the Lord Jesus' return is near, and our work must be done with zeal, obedience, and single purpose, for strange fire makes any offering an abomination.

We were encouraged by attendance of several strangers at the Eden lecture.

J. A. DeF.

Manchester.—Memorial Hall, Albert Square, Manchester. Sundays : Breaking of Bread, 11.30 a.m. ; Lecture, 3.15 p.m. Thursdays : 7.15 p.m. at Onward Hall, Deansgate. Law of Moses Class : Second Saturday each month at 3.30 p.m.

Arrangements are completed for the special effort at Stockport on Saturday, May 21st. Ten thousand invitations cards are being distributed, and notices placed in all the Stockport buses. Experience teaches that zealous efforts in the witness are always needed ; but the blessing comes from a power greater than ours. In this spirit we go forth to the work seeking His help.

A map has been received from Jerusalem on which as a result of recent archaeological research nearly all the places in Israel in the time of Joshua are given. Unfortunately, all the names are in Hebrew. Efforts are being made to translate so that a better understanding of the book of Joshua may be had. W.V.B.