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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 ye be not deceived"

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

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At the Table of the Lord

“The Finger of God”

AS we read the record of the Almighty's dealing through Moses, with the gods of Egypt, we may ask, Why did He do so? True, it was to deliver His people, Israel, out of bondage, but further, we are told it was so that “The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them” (Exodus 7 : 5). It was to give glory to the God of Israel, to exalt His Name before all of Egypt. How well they came to know this—His great work! Further, we read,

“For I will at this time send all my plagues . . . that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth. . . . And thou shalt be cut off from the earth. . . . For this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee **my power**; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth” (Exodus 9 : 16).

This was indeed His great purpose at that time, and it is still His purpose, that His Name may be declared throughout all the earth. It will be fully accomplished, we know, when His Son Jesus returns.

To this end, God worked through Moses, Aaron, and Israel almost 3500 years ago. Today He works with His people even with you and me, brethren and sisters, for the same purpose—that it may be known that **HE IS THE LORD**. Must it not work in us, then, this desire to glorify that Name, as His chosen people, even as Israel?

“This is the finger of God”

As we read of His power at work in Egypt on behalf of His people to redeem them from bondage, it helps us to trust in Him—to believe that His Name **WILL** be glorified in all the earth, and that He will redeem us, if we submit to His will. Let us then strive to perceive fully that power and its great work in Egypt.

For a time, it appeared that their magicians had an equivalent power to that which Moses exhibited; but only to the casual observer and only for a limited period of time. Even this was confounded, for we read of their experience with the plague of the lice.

“The magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not . . .” (Exodus 8 : 18).

God did not permit it to be done. Their reaction is given to us in verse 19—

“Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, **THIS IS THE FINGER OF GOD. . .**”

It was just that! The Hand of God confounding them exalting Himself. Brethren and sisters, do we not sometimes feel the finger of God in our lives, delivering, sustaining, chastening us; and sometimes confounding the adversary? All of us have first-hand knowledge of the power of that finger. What a great deal is involved in this symbol. We find the word **finger** comes from a word meaning **to grasp**. This is exactly what God was doing in Egypt—grasping, seizing hold of the gods of Egypt, of the magicians of Pharaoh, to confound them. In that grasp, the magicians felt helpless, hopeless, and were forced to acknowledge “**THIS IS THE FINGER OF GOD.**”

As we, too, feel that finger grasping us, not to confound, but to strengthen, and guide, let us recognize it, acknowledge, and submit to it. Let us not be like Pharaoh who hardened his heart and was ultimately destroyed.

“Written with the finger of God”

How wonderfully gracious God is to those who do submit, receiving direction in the way He would have them go! In Exodus 31 : 18, we read of His blessing to Israel (and ourselves).

“And He gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, **written with the finger OF GOD.**”

What blessing was granted in that Law—in those tables of testimony to help Israel, and ourselves. “Thou shalt. . . .” “Thou shalt not. . . .” Guideposts for all living, and also teaching of Jesus, the Son of God, who walked in perfect obedience to that Law before His Father.

Further we read in Exodus 32 : 16,

“The tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.”

Moses was instructed to put these tables in the ark. We know that Jesus, the anti-typical ark, had them in His heart. The finger of God was there, engraving upon his heart His Law, enabling Jesus

to get the victory over His flesh. And we have in Him our example, brethren and sisters.

How very great God's work is—the work of His Hand! David is one whose heart was also touched. God called him, “a man after mine own heart.” This heart finds expression in Psalm 8 : 1-4—

“O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!”

This was God's purpose with Pharaoh, to show to His people how excellent indeed is His Name! Pharaoh refused it. David recognized, submitted, and so was blessed. Further, his words were—

“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him. . . .”

The **heavens, the moon and stars**—all His work, His Hand created them. How far beyond our comprehension they are, brethren and sisters—so far removed that we cannot conceive of such distance. Scientists theoretically measure it in “light years”—but it is all the work of His Hands. Man today presumes to reach out toward the moon, toward Mars and other planets, hoping some day to set foot on them. But man is only touching the fringes of the universe—so vast, so great, so infinite, and all the work of Him whom we may call our Father. Can we understand David's reaction, “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him?” What are we? His work so marvellously made; yet ourselves so small and of no strength. Let us consider this, and be filled with gratitude and awe.

In Jesus' day, as in all the ages, His Power has been evident. In Luke 11 : 20, we read His words—

“ . . . if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.”

It was the power of the Spirit in Jesus that enabled Him to heal, to cast out the evil spirit. It was the same finger of God used against Egypt, against Pharaoh, against his magicians. That same finger of God can help and heal in all our needs today, if we seek it and submit to His hand.

The handwriting on the wall

There is another instance of the finger of God given to help us, in the experience of Belshazzar, King of Babylon, who defiled the vessels of God's house. In Daniel 5 : 5, we read of the Almighty's vengeance.

“ In the same hour came forth fingers of a man’s hand, and wrote . . . upon the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace. . . .”

The writing when interpreted by Daniel, revealed the calamitous end for this King of Babylon. In verse 30, we find—

“ In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius, the Mede took the kingdom. . . .”

This is a well known happening—so much so that the expression, “ the handwriting on the wall ” is still used today as a figure forewarning of bad news. It was God’s handwriting on the wall, and it did come to pass—the finger of God to destroy His enemies, to strengthen His children, and to exalt His Holy Name.

Let us give thoughtful consideration, brethren and sisters, to our very privileged and undeserving position, a people so blessed as to be allowed to see and know the gracious Hand of the Heavenly Father; taking hold of our very lives to redeem, and to change our natures which so lack in perception and holiness.

Let us be ever so careful that our works and our response do indeed magnify His Glorious NAME.

J.A.DeF.



Christendom — and others — Astray

The Doctrine of Fellowship and Baptism.

IN the two previous issues it was seen that the doctrine of fellowship was clearly taught by the Lord Jesus and His Apostles. That “ fellowship ” is a scriptural term not to be confused with “ membership,” and is the bond which binds all members of the One Body to the Almighty and His Son.

The simple condition for this honourable and honoured fellowship is “ walking in the light.” To claim fellowship with God while “ walking in darkness,” the Apostle John says, is a “ lie.” All sin, but if this is acknowledged, condemned, and forgiveness sought there is still a “ walking in the light.” The besetting danger because of

pride is to excuse sin, and refuse to condemn transgression. Sin excused, or condoned, that is unrepented of is rebellion against the Most High, and is a "walking in darkness," in which fellowship with God is impossible.

"Fellowship one with another" is entirely dependent upon each being in fellowship with God, that is, each and all "walking in the light." To claim fellowship with rebels, with those "walking in darkness," destroys completely the doctrine of fellowship, and amounts to joining hands with rebels against God. How careful then we ought to be that a sentimental charity does not make us rebels against the great God of heaven. We cannot be kinder than God.

Can an Apostate Body Baptise?

All apostate Bodies are in darkness whatever their claims. They have departed from the faith. Not into another department of Truth or light. For when the light is left, there must be entrance into darkness!

The divisions of the past have been necessary for the preservation of the light. Apart from such divisions the light would have been extinguished long ago by the ever-powerful and seductive darkness.

Baptism involves division or separation from the world; by which the world with its many sects is condemned as being in darkness. Baptism is the means of being brought from the darkness of death to the light of life.

How could there be a true baptism in the darkness? For one to be born as a child of light surrounded by those "walking in darkness," is a thought which does immediate violence to the doctrine of fellowship.

"No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." John 6 : 44.

These few words are very powerful. They mean except God brings a man to Christ, there is no hope. Christ is the "light of the world," and Christ will never dwell in the darkness of apostasy.

The quest of the seeker of salvation will be to find Christ, and he will soon learn not to look for Him in any apostate sect.

Apostasy means a "falling away"; a departure from the faith. The divisions of the past show this has happened many times. For example in 1885 Suffolk Street left the Truth because of the error of "Partial Inspiration." If they left the light, they went into darkness. Suffolk Street became part of the darkness of the Apostasy; to which God would never call any to be "justified" by baptism. To think otherwise would be a denial of the holiness and justice of God.

Christ only dwells in the One undivided Body of which He is the Head. God will only call those in the darkness to this Body where His Son dwells. There is no life in any other Body. This explains why the Apostle Paul says:

"For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body . . . and have been all made made to drink into one Spirit."

1 Corinthians 12 : 13.

Christ is not in the darkness of apostasy, neither will His Spirit be found there, for truly, there is only "one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling."

The essential in baptism is to be joined to Christ. This must ever be kept in mind. It is impossible to be joined to the darkness of an apostate Body and be joined to Christ. This is why an apostate Body cannot "baptise."

Before a division there may be a manifestation of certain errors and practices causing the righteous great anxiety, and earnest pleading for a removal of all that is wrong in the sight of God. It is only when a crisis comes, and division is indicated that these things which were leavenous can be removed. Experience of divisions shows that the power of darkness nearly engulfed all. The feeling afterwards is: "How nearly we were all lost." How important at this juncture "to strengthen the things which remain, that were ready to die." After the division the encroaching darkness is removed. Christ does not dwell with those left. How can He? If this were so it means not only is there a divided Christ, but why divide at all? For we **ought** all to be where Christ is. If those falling away are not fit for our fellowship, can they be for Christ's? And if they are fit for His fellowship, surely they should be for ours.

It is a grave mistake to refer back to the errors of encroaching darkness as being permissible; as not invalidating baptism in an apostate Body. When the early brethren contended against "Judaizing," the Body was troubled. When division came those

espousing this error would be left—in the darkness, without Christ. Division came to Smyrna. The Ecclesia had been greatly tried and troubled. Would Christ be with those left in the darkness?—The “Synagogue of Satan.” The very thought is repulsive.

Clearly when division takes place Christ is not divided. Those who uphold the Truth remain in the light. Those left depart from the Truth into darkness, and are without Christ, where true baptism cannot take place.

As for an example in recent times, take for instance the division of 1923. There were many things happening before the division which troubled the righteous and we believe must have grieved the Spirit. After the division these things were rejected. These included: that Jesus had clean flesh, munition making, voting, and worldly practices which had become all too prevalent.

True baptism could only be where Christ was, that is, prior to 1923 in the tormented Body. After the division, with the removal of those things which grieved the Spirit it must not be supposed that true baptism could take place where these things and worse continued to be practised in the darkness of the “Synagogue of Satan”—in the apostasy.

Finally, let us consider how it is impossible for true baptism to take place in the darkness of apostasy.

Would God call out of the darkness, and leave one in the darkness? Would God draw one to the “light of the world,” to be left enshrouded in the mists of apostasy? Would God, who “predestinates and calls,” allow new-born babes in Christ to be nursed in the lap of one of the “harlot daughters”? Would God forget a tender infant, recently “justified” by baptism, and allow such to be immediately defiled by association with the “Mother of harlots” or any of the “abominations of the earth?”

No — impossible!

“Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.” Isaiah 49 : 15-16.

This could never be said of those who remain where God is not.

(To be continued . . .)

The Gospel

Meeting with God at Mount Sinai, Condemnation to wander forty years in the wilderness.

AFTER the shattering event of the slaying of the firstborn of Egypt there was only one thought in the minds of the Egyptians. Even while it was still night Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, voicing the feelings of all his people saying, "Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also."

So Israel departed, a nation on the move, for they numbered six hundred thousand men not counting the women and children, and also there was a "mixed multitude with them" with flocks and herds and very many cattle.

The quickest route to the land of Canaan, the promised land, was through the wilderness of Shur, bordering the Mediterranean Sea. But if this route had been taken the people would have been brought into conflict with the Philistines. God in His wisdom felt such a trial would be too great in the circumstances and so they were led southwards by a miraculous pillar of cloud that became luminous by night as though a fire burned in it.

Pharaoh soon had second thoughts about letting the people go. "Why should he let such an inexpensive labour force escape?" Shortly Israel came to the expanse of the Red Sea across which they could see the terrain of the wilderness of Shur at its southern extremity, but as they looked backed they saw that Pharaoh's army was pursuing them. It appeared that Pharaoh had them trapped, for the Red Sea was a barrier. But now Moses encouraged them with impressive words of faith, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord . . ." Even as Moses stretched out his hand over the sea the east wind began to blow with great force, soon the waters were parted leaving a dry route across the bed over which Israel could cross. When the Egyptians saw what was happening they decided to follow them, an audacious act that was to incur the divine displeasure and which was to result in the destruction of the Egyptian army. Once Israel had crossed safely Moses was instructed by God to stretch his hand over the sea again, and as the waters thundered together the enemy of Israel was completely overwhelmed.

What a wonderful deliverance this was, the people began to sing and dance with joy over their escape, but how quickly they lost faith in their God who had performed so many wonderful things in their sight. After three days of wandering in the wilderness of Etham they eventually found water at Marah which was brackish, its bitterness preventing them from enjoying the refreshing for which they yearned. The people began to murmur under the trial. But again God was there to help and protect. He instructed Moses how to make the waters sweet, and then they were reminded that it was 'the Lord that healed them.' Later they came to Elim with its abundance of water, and then onwards into the wilderness of Sin and to Rephidim where there was difficulty over water again, but this was provided for them out of 'the Rock,' but not before the people had spoken the ill and doubtful words "Is the Lord among us or not?" It was at this juncture that the tribe of Amalek fought unsuccessfully against Israel, who though conquerors, were shown that it was God who ensured their victory, for they only prevailed through the hand of Moses holding the rod of God being lifted up as he stood upon a hill for all to see.

Then in the third month after leaving Egypt they came to the desert of Sinai. After the trials of the way they were now to experience God's visitation upon Mount Sinai, the surrounding area of which at that time was comparatively pleasant. The nation was in need of a law and presently they were to receive that law from heaven.

Moses was called up into the mountain which suddenly was enveloped in a thick cloud with lightning flashes and thunder, the ground quaking greatly and a smoke arising as if from a furnace. Then there was a trumpet voice sounding long and becoming louder and louder. It was in such a solemn and awe-inspiring setting that the Ten Commandments were given and also all the judgments and instructions of the law and the pattern of the tabernacle which was to be the place of the dwelling of God among them, the centre of their religious life. For forty days and forty nights Moses was in the Mount receiving guidance for the welfare of God's people, whilst, alas, down below, even in the presence of such an awful majesty, the people were making a golden calf.

As Moses returned after his lengthy absence, carrying two tablets of stone on which the instructions of the law had been inscribed by the finger of God, ere he came into the camp, he knew of the disloyalty and foolishness of the people and in righteous anger broke the tablets on the ground beneath the mount. Thus was the breaking

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of the covenant by the people signified, for previously, before Moses' absence, they had heard the law read out to them and had made the promise that "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." God forgave the people after Moses interceded for them and brought them to a position of repentance. The covenant was renewed for Moses shaped two more tables of stone and again on ascending Sinai with them the words of the ten commandments were written upon them.

Thus Sinai became the place of heavenly visitation and law giving, and therefore the seat of judgment; for it is to Sinai that He who is to judge His people righteously is to return.

The first work of Christ when He comes again is to judge the quick and the dead, who are to be raised. Those who have known the Gospel and therefore have a responsibility to such knowledge. Afterwards Christ who is the "Messenger of the Covenant" will fulfil the ancient prophecy as the representative of the Most High:—

"The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them: He shined forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints . . ." (Deut. 33, v. 2).

The lesson of Sinai is that in forty days Israel turned to worship other gods though they had witnessed so many miracles. But shortly afterwards, even as they came to the promised land, and though they had experienced the power of God's help and protection, their hearts turned to water. Spies sent out to search the land of Canaan returned with the evil report that the land was impregnable. The people were strong of stature and some were giants, and the cities were walled and very great. Disaffection spread like wildfire and there was talk of stoning Moses. The nation was, through unbelief, not ready to enjoy their inheritance and so because God withdrew His aid there was now to be forty years of testing in the wilderness, at the end of which only one or two men of faith amongst those of a responsible age would be left. Children, too tender at that time, but later grown up to stature and strength would conquer and inherit the land in their stead. Thus in forty days the people who had escaped from Egypt revealed their unfaithfulness, and not learning the lesson, they continued on a course which condemned them to a waiting period of forty years during which the blessing of a land flowing with milk and honey was withheld from them. A teaching for subsequent generations that in leaving the world, faith in God and the promises of His gospel must be exercised, if the blessing promised from the beginning is to be attained.

“The Signs of His Coming and of the end of the World”

“THE WAY OF PEACE THEY KNOW NOT; AND THERE IS NO JUDGMENT IN THEIR GOINGS: THEY HAVE MADE THEM CROOKED PATHS: WHOSOEVER GOETH THEREIN SHALL NOT KNOW PEACE” (Isaiah 59, v. 8).

THESSE words though addressed to the nation of Israel in the first place have been an ever present indictment to all generations. How forcibly they condemn the ways of mankind in this current period of time.

“None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies . . .” (Isaiah 59, v. 4).

The cry, of course, is again being raised for “peace.” A shout is lifted up for “justice.” But it is only a half-hearted plea.

At the time of writing it has been predicted that informal talks between the British Government and the illegal Rhodesian regime will shortly take place. Men are hoping that such will be a successful preliminary to greater efforts which will open up the way out of the deepening UDI crisis that looked liked involving the whole of Southern Africa. But if a settlement of the differences is achieved will it be true justice? The stubbornness of self-interest, it can be safely assumed, will ensure that it will not.

“Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness” (Isaiah 59, v. 9).

There is no lifting of the gloom; no brightening of the prospect for those who suffer injustice. The result can only be unrest; the writhings of those who labour under a feeling of grievance.

The Soviet Foreign Minister recently paid an official visit to Italy, with an equally official visit to the Vatican. His audience with the Pope was described as longer than usual. In addition to the interpreters the Soviet Ambassador to Italy and the Vatican Secretary of State were present at the interview.

Afterwards the Soviet Foreign Minister issued a statement for the press in which he said:—

“We are convinced that all men, regardless of their ideology

or their belief, should meet in the name of peace and harmony. Ours was a private meeting, but both parties were able to express their views on some fundamental problems affecting world peace."

He went on to say that his Government sought greater collaboration with the Vatican, and he also declared that there would be closer collaboration between Russia and Italy in economy, science and culture. He mentioned his idea of a "pan-European conference," to be strictly European in its agenda, leaving out therefore the United States. One of the proposals such a conference should discuss, he said, would be the reduction or withdrawal of foreign troops from Europe, there should also be considerations of reducing nuclear armaments, the introduction of denuclearised zones, and a peaceful solution to the problem of a divided Germany.

The Russian politician, who by his visit seemed to convey Russia's recognition of the Pope's position as an influential world leader, received from the Pope a copy, translated into Russian, of the Ecumenical Council document "The Light of Nations." For his part, as he prepared to leave for Moscow, he declared:—

"We appreciate the humanism of your great Italian renaissance because our Marxist ideology is, above all humanistic."

To the gullible such news might sound encouraging. Are they beginning to find "the way of peace"? But the scripture has declared that "they have made them crooked paths," and that "they conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity" and "weave the spider's web."

This becomes the more evident as further news is considered. Do Russia's actions agree with the words of her spokesman, that regardless of ideology or belief there should be a meeting in the name of peace and harmony?

A recent Soviet-Syrian pact has been the cause of apprehension in the Middle East. In February an extremist faction seized power in Syria from its more moderate rivals, and in practically no time at all Russia extended the hand of favour, agreeing to finance a Euphrates Dam scheme. The question is being asked, "Why should the Russians associate with such a precarious and unpopular regime?" The obvious answer is that Russia wants to increase her prestige in the Middle East, and develop her sphere of influence there. Already the Russians are engaged on development projects in Syria, therefore their financing of a dam will have a similar effect in improving Syria's economy, as the Aswan High Dam project has

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had, and is expected to have, on the Egyptian. The result will be a more powerful Syria, and a Syria that will be likely to co-operate with Russian political schemes. Already the Arab world's leading Communist has returned to Syria after eight years exile.

From Cairo comes the even more significant news that ten years after Britain evacuated its Suez Canal base, Egypt has signed a secret defence treaty which gives the Soviet Union military staging posts on her territory. In return, Russia has pledged Egypt unlimited military support. It has not however been described as a formal defence pact, but rather a hitherto undisclosed protocol to a treaty effected during the visit to Egypt of the Soviet First Deputy Defence Minister, nor was it exclusively military, but also covered certain economic matters.

These open agreements were to be paid for by secret facilities now disclosed. Russia was to have three military staging posts—at Sidi Barrani (on the coast near the Libyan border), at Siwa Oasis (in the western desert) and at Quseir, on the Red Sea, manned in peace-time only by a skeleton staff of Russians. These would supervise the construction of air strips and radar systems. The coastal bases would also be developed for various naval purposes. All three would be able to accommodate large forces in the event of hostilities. In addition, the Russians would also supervise and have interest in several air strips to be built in upper Egypt near the Sudan, along the Western Desert border with Libya and the Sinai desert. Also the Russian navy would have peace-time access to Egypt's Mediterranean and Red Sea ports for refuelling and logistic purposes.

The importance with which such an alliance is being regarded, and of it being formally ratified, including the secret protocol of the original agreement, seems most evident in the news that the Russian Premier has arranged to visit Egypt exactly two years after Krushchev's rapturous reception by the Egyptian people.

The Western Powers on the other hand are also hard at work. It is reported that a new Islamic Pact is being constructed by Britain and America in the Persian Gulf and Arabia.

These things are very significant, especially as they are being developed in an area that affects the new nation of Israel. The powers of the East and West are each preparing themselves for a position and a sphere of influence in territory that is to be affected by startling events that will fulfil the ancient prophecies. "The way of peace they know not," but the outcome is clear:—

“ According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, fury to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies; to the islands He will repay recompense.

So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the West, and His glory from the rising of the sun.

When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.

And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord.”

(Isaiah 59, vv. 18-20).

D.L.



Correspondence

Letter to Mr. James Carter.

“ Having read your article on ‘ Fellowship. A time to separate ’ in the March issue of ‘ The Testimony, ’ I am prompted to ask the following question:

Was the action of Robert Roberts in supporting a division in 1885 righteous and necessary for the preservation of the Truth against the heresy of Partial Inspiration? ”

Letter from Mr. James Carter.

“ Thank you for your letter.

Your query, however, savours too strongly of Matthew 22 : 15, or Mark 12 : 13, not overlooking Luke 20 : 30.

‘ I will also ask you one question. ’ Jesus, who ‘ walked in the midst of the lightstands ’ in Asia, did not command the ‘ few ’ in Sardis to disfellowship the remainder in Sardis, and although had ‘ the doctrine of Balaam, ’ and ‘ suffered that woman Jezebel ’ he still walked in their midst. It was not until many years later that these lightstands were ‘ removed out of their place. ’

Perhaps you can explain this? ”

(Readers will find that the passages referred to are those in which counsel was taken to entangle Jesus.)

Letter to Mr. James Carter.

It is intended to publish in our magazine the question which we sent to you and your reply, from which readers will judge for themselves whether or not the question we asked you was one that you ought to answer or was calculated merely to entrap.

Regarding the questions which you have asked these will be answered in a forthright manner in the correspondence columns of our magazine.”

Comment.

In the article on “Fellowship. A time to separate,” Mr. Carter said:

“The writer urges that **all** ecclesias adopt a similar procedure, and so help to end the present ecclesial indecision. It has arisen because ecclesias with members who propagate contrary views and others equally pernicious (for example, the Inspiration of the Scriptures is again assailed as it was 80 years ago, when Bro. Robert Roberts rightly took vigorous action—but which appears to be lacking today) have not had either moral strength or courage—or both—to deal with them.”

If Mr. Carter cannot answer the simple question put to him with a definite affirmative, then what is the above statement worth? Readers will easily be able to perceive that the statement is valueless, and whether our question was a trap.

A forthright answer to Mr. Carter's questions about the seven Asian ecclesias will be found in the article entitled ‘Christendom — and others — Astray’ in our March issue. A copy will be gladly sent to any reader on application.

The only point not dealt with in this Article is the question about Jesus walking in the “midst of the seven golden lightstands.” It is important to realise that this is part of the vision which the Apostle John saw when he was “in the Spirit on the Lord's day”; a vision

of the glorified Body of Christ in the Kingdom, complete as signified by the number seven. The messages in the letters to the seven Asian ecclesias were to help all to attain to this glory, bearing in mind that each letter was sent to all the ecclesias. No ecclesia had attained at the time to the incorruptible state represented by the gold.

In the case of Laodicea Jesus obviously was not “walking in their midst” in view of what He says. He likens this ecclesia to the ejecta to be spewed out of His mouth. Would He ever walk in the midst of such revolting and repulsive material? Also, since He says that He “stands at the door and knocks,” it shows clearly He was not inside the Ecclesia—“walking in their midst”—but outside the Ecclesia.

W.V.B.



Is It I?

“Now when the even was come, He sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, He said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto Him, Lord, is it I?”

(Matthew 26, vv. 20 to 22).

JUDAS himself finally asked the question, possibly to avoid the conspicuousness of not asking when all the others had done so. The answer was, “Thou hast said.”

But the lesson is that **every one of them** began to say: “Lord, is it I?” Was it a good thing that they should so question with themselves and their Master, for they doubted themselves? The fact is that Jesus had chosen His Apostles by the spirit, because of special qualities inherent in them, which would make them suitable vessels for a particular work after His decease. Perhaps this suitability is made more evident on the consideration that they were

THE REMNANT

not so confident of themselves that they could not say "Lord is it I?"

It is a good thing at times to doubt oneself. One's own motives and even faithfulness. Not to be so confident of the future as to think there could never be a betrayal, an injuring of Christ, or those who are His. The well known phrase comes to mind, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." It is at a time when there is a feeling of security and of standing that there may be danger. A feeling of a false sense of security, metaphorically implying that it is unnecessary for such a question as "Lord is it I?"

The lesson of Judas is that it was far too late when he began his own self-examination and he died in a torment of conscience. Everyone of course, makes mistakes, as is so evident in the everyday life of our contemporaries who very often do not like to admit their faults. Men do not always see their own mistakes, or cannot accept that they are wrong, tending always to excuse themselves. But confidence can lead to stubborn errors, and the end of such a course is destruction. Even Peter, who said "Lord is it I?" also expressed a resolve that he did not keep. "Though all shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. . . . Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee" (Matt. 26, vv. 33-35). This was not the resolution of Peter only. "Likewise also said all the disciples" (v. 35). Yes, they could question among themselves when Jesus said, "One of you shall betray me." But when they were collectively told, "All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered" (v. 31) their protest as a body that they could not fail in this matter was over confidence.

But it is evident that their resolve quickly failed; and Peter, the leader of their resolve denied his master three times. But Peter learned from the experience. His conscience was smitten and he wept bitterly. There would be less confidence after this in his own ability to remain firm and a realisation that the mistake became a greater one because previous to it happening he had so zealously affirmed that it would not happen. Can it not be said that when Jesus appeared to the disciples and Peter, at the Sea of Galilee after the resurrection there was a reminder of this event so that the mistake of the past would not be forgotten?

"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?"

". . . Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee."

"Feed my lambs."

“ Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? ”

“ Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.”

“ Feed my sheep.”

“ Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me. . . . ”

Peter felt grieved—

“ Lord thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.”

“ Feed my sheep ” (John 21, vv. 15-17).

Should Peter have felt grieved? Was it not right in view of the mistake of the past that Peter should be reminded in this way? Was it not right, even though he had already had the lesson of the denial, that he should be reminded three times of how his Master expected he should show his love for Him? Yes, the account is showing that lessons can be forgotten. Peter was a man of great character but even he forgot to a degree. Such things preserved on record are ensamples. Sometimes brethren and sisters need to be reminded, perhaps time and time again even though there is a protesting of love. It is indeed easy to protest without thinking of the imperfections in that love.

Peter **did** love Jesus; but can it not be said that he would be more determined to show his love for his master in the work with the lambs and the sheep after the painful questioning by Jesus at the sea of Galilee which would make a deep impression upon him? Yes, it is easy to say, and not do. Easy to feel confidence in one's own steadfastness, and that the mistakes of the past will not be repeated. But if Christ required Peter to repeat his love three times at one and the same occasion, what does He require now?

Again in looking at Peter a further lesson can be perceived. Peter **had gone a fishing**, yet he protested his love and was told to feed the sheep. And he had also previously protested that he would not deny his master. Yes, men need to be reminded that they do better when they doubt themselves and question their own actions and motives remembering their own past mistakes. This attitude will cause the mind to look to God for protection and guidance in weakness of which there will be a great consciousness.

“ Lord is it I? ” is better than

“ I will never be offended.”

D.L.

News from the Ecclesias

Eden, New York. Grange Hall, Church Street

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m. Sunday School 1.30 p.m. Bible Class, Mid-week, Forestville and Orchard Park. Alternate weeks, Revelation Study.

The message of love, creating a warmth in our hearts, was gratefully received from our brethren and sisters assembled at the Gathering.

The mercy and compassion of our God is seen in the allowing of a continued correspondence. The simplicity of His Word is all that is necessary for salvation. Only where this is perceived and the Word heard, does confusion leave.

Letters from brethren and sisters are gratefully received. Always they fill a need, providing strength and joy in us, even though we may not be able to respond as quickly as we would desire.

J.A.DeF.

Black Rock, Portmadoc.

It has been most interesting and encouraging to have six scholars at our Sunday School on April 17th.

In view of the remarks made and the questions asked it helps us to understand why Jesus spake of children as He did.

We now look forward to the summer and the valued visit of the brethren and sisters.

—per J.S.

Newtownards, Co. Down, N. Ireland.

Breaking of Bread, Sunday, 11.30 p.m. Sunday School, 2.30 Bible Class, Wednesday.

Connection with some in the Belfast Christadelphian meeting is being maintained though on different lines from the first meetings. An understandable desire to obtain the principles of The Truth

quickly and clearly, requires to be tempered with the teaching that the Spirit of God can only be spiritually discerned (1 Cor. 2). We can see how great the need is, and pray that the opportunity now being given may be firmly taken in the way that God has decreed, by all who recognise the magnitude of the error that is now in that body.

We hope to have the Sunday School outing, God willing, on Saturday, 18th June. J.P.

Nottingham.

Once again our Whitsun Fraternal draws near and we assure all who can attend of a hearty welcome.

We cannot expect any from the Eden Ecclesia but our Subject and Hymns will again be of their choosing.

In this way they feel that they have a share with us, though absent.

How near is the Gathering of the "mighty" ones?

H.J.S.

Manchester. Memorial Hall, M.A.P.S. Building, Albert Square, Manchester.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m. Lecture 3.30 p.m.

Thursday, 7.15 p.m., Onward Hall, Deansgate.

Saturday Bible Class 3.45 p.m. For dates please refer to plan.

Great encouragement and joy is felt at the amount of real interest in the Truth in this part of the Lord's vineyard.

To be granted the opportunity of ministering to those who in the past have only had the letter of the Truth is an experience transcending the ability of words to express. The loving-kindness of God is so great, His condescension so marvellous in calling some from the darkness to the "inheritance of the saints in light."

This great work requires us to examine ourselves to make sure that we are circumspect in all things and worthy to be co-labourers together with God in His work which will survive when all the works of men have perished. W.V.B.