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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

CHRISTENDOM - AND OTHERS - ASTRAY

THE GOSPEL

SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD

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NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

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At the Table of the Lord

“Thou shalt rejoice”

AS we read Moses' words in Deuteronomy, the mind is impressed with the completeness of God's instruction to His people. Let us take this instruction for ourselves, for we are the children of God as our brethren in Israel were so long ago.

Can we enter into Israel's circumstances when Moses spoke to them these words of God? They were about to enter the land promised to their Fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, having waited a long time to experience that great blessing. They had wandered for forty years in the wilderness because of refusal to submit to God. The faithful in Israel would be longing to enter that inheritance, perceiving the great blessing their God was extending to them, seeing in the provision of that inheritance an earnest of the eternal blessing promised to all the faithful children of God—the kingdom of their Messiah.

How careful God was in giving them instruction, preparing them to live in that inheritance in a way pleasing and acceptable to Him, thus assuring their own peace and happiness. This divine help is also for ourselves, brethren and sisters, as we, too, long for the inheritance promised.

In Deuteronomy 26 : 1-2, we read:

“ . . . when thou art come into the land . . . thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth . . . and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name there . . . and say . . . I profess this day unto the Lord thy God, that I am come unto the country which the Lord sware . . . to give us.”

An acknowledgment that it was the Lord's doing—acknowledging with gratitude and thanksgiving that His promise was fulfilled, this His blessing which had been their hope was accomplished. How needful it was that Israel should so acknowledge, for they could never have accomplished it themselves. They could not have survived the forty years in the wilderness without the provision of the manna—the “bread from heaven”—or the water out of the Rock—the “living water,” which sustained them.

What of ourselves, brethren and sisters—we, too, need to acknowledge with Israel that we cannot endure the journey nor hope to enter into the inheritance without the “bread from heaven” without the “living water” which daily preserves our life. How pleasing to God, how glorifying to Him is such a mind! Is it ours?

“A Syrian ready to perish”

The instruction of the all-wise Father continues, verse 5:

“And thou shalt speak and say before the Lord thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt . . . and became there a nation. . . .”

Again, an acknowledgment that we are by nature alien to the covenants of Israel, ready to perish, were it not for the mercy and love of God. The experience of Israel helps, for we remember how Joseph was led of God to Egypt and proved to be the means of saving his brethren in time of famine — God’s hand upon His people to deliver. This same hand is upon us today, working in wondrous ways to save us from perishing. Let us remember that we are brought into the hope of Israel through Christ. Let us remember that we were Gentiles, alien to the covenants of Israel, ready to perish; and God in His mercy delivered us from that position and has given us the hope of Israel. How grateful we should feel! and, yet, how we forget; how we neglect at times.

To Israel in Egypt, trial came as Pharaoh sought to destroy them as a people. God heard their cry, as we read in Deuteronomy 26 : 7-9:

“ . . . when we cried . . . the Lord heard our voice, and looked on our affliction . . . and brought us forth . . . with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm . . . and he hath brought us unto this place, and hath given us this land . . . that floweth with milk and honey.”

What a great deliverance they experienced! We have in a measure experienced the same deliverance, having been taken out of bondage and darkness, and having been brought under His care and protection. We, then, brethren and sisters, can—indeed must—join with Israel in rejoicing at this deliverance, this care shown to us. How can this be done? God’s instruction in Deuteronomy 26 : 10-11 shows us how God would have it done, as we acknowledge His care:

“And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me. And thou shalt set it

before the Lord . . . and worship before the Lord . . . and thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee. . . .”

Let us strive to enter into the feelings of our brethren in Israel. They had just completed forty years of wandering in a vast and barren wilderness where there was no fruit. How great would be their craving for it, and He meant for them to enjoy it—but wait; the instruction of God was, “bring the firstfruits unto Me.” What restraint it would require to take the first of that fruit and bring it unto the Lord with rejoicing, acknowledging that it was His, of His providing—and what gratitude and realization! How pleasing this mind would be to God.

“ Rejoice ”

Further, they were instructed:

“ Thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath given unto thee.”

Is this what our God looks for in His people for whom He has done so much—“rejoicing in every good thing.” Such a response exhibits a heart filled with gratitude for His provision, for “every good thing.”

We might stop and ask ourselves, brethren and sisters, do we always do this, always rejoice in what God has provided? Israel didn't; for they murmured against the manna, against the wondering, against the lack of water and flesh to eat. Yet, these were of God and so were “good things,” for He bestows only those things which are good for us. How easy it is to fail to recognize this and so, finding fault, fail to rejoice, to glorify Him.

“To rejoice,” we find, comes from a word meaning, “to brighten up” and is used as “cheer up,” “be glad,” “cause to rejoice.” It is difficult at times to be glad, to rejoice at trial, tribulation; but when we remember that the trial is the result of God's loving hand upon us to chasten, should we not rejoice for it is a “good thing.” If we can truly perceive the Father's goodness in these things, would we murmur and grieve?

“ Oh that men would praise the Lord ”

David's spirit is a help to us in perceiving that all the Father

bestows upon us is for our good and therefore to be cause for rejoicing. Psalms 107 : 21-22:

“ Oh that men would praise the Lord for his **goodness**, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.”

How can we declare His works with rejoicing? The word “ declare,” we find, means, “ to count,” “ tell,” or “ reckon up.” Should we not count up His works on our behalf, count the blessings He bestows so graciously because we are His children. As we count them up, it will help us to a greater appreciation of all He does on our behalf and will better enable us to rejoice with gladness of heart. Let us remember how He has, like to Israel, called us, blessed us, worked wonderful works on our behalf—does so today and every day of our time of probation. Let us declare His works with rejoicing in the spirit of David, and so be truly able to offer up the “ sacrifices of thanksgiving ”—those offerings which are so pleasing and acceptable to God because they come from a grateful and happy heart.

We find His instruction in Deuteronomy 12 : 5-7 helpful:

“ . . . unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose . . . to put his name there . . . thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices . . . and there ye shall eat before the Lord your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto. . . .”

Would these be the sacrifices of thanksgiving? How does it apply to ourselves, brethren and sisters, for being God’s instruction, it must? We come to the meeting, striving to meet in His name. Should we not do so rejoicing that we are allowed this blessing, this fellowship, seeking to lift up our hands filled with the sacrifices of thanksgiving, as Paul exhorts:

“ By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” Hebrews 13 : 15-16.

As we meet, we seek to be joined in fellowship with the Lord Jesus who so fully offered up the sacrifices of thanksgiving—even His whole life. Let us remember His rejoicing at God’s hand upon Him, enabling Him to get the victory. His spirit is found in Psalms 21 : 1:

“The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice! Thou has given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.” (“Selah,” meaning “value it, considering the end.”)

Can we, brethren and sisters, cultivate this spirit in ourselves, take the instruction God has granted in Deuteronomy, in Hebrews, in the Psalms, in the prophets, and “value it, considering the end”? Can we—do we find joy in every good thing which the Lord gives us? Let us believe, brethren and sisters; let us submit in trust. Pain and tears we are all acquainted with. So was Moses, David, and Jesus. Yet, the inner man can find joy even in the midst of such trial—and with patience, our hearts can be lifted up and delivered from sorrow and suffering to joy unspeakable, even now, and so much more so in time certain to come—if we can hold fast, helping each other, looking for the help which He wants us to experience.

We are given a glimpse of what rejoicing there will be at that time, Revelation 19 : 7:

“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.”

J.A.DeF.

Christendom — and others' — Astray

The Spirit of the Law the Spirit of Christ.

“Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord.”

Deuteronomy 6 : 4.

UNITY invests the Truth with an unsurpassable and imperishable beauty. From the foundation of the world there has been unity of purpose, unity of doctrine, and unity of Spirit. Unlike the philosophies and sciences of men which change from generation to generation like the clothes they wear, the Truth is as immutable and incorruptible as the gold of the Holy place. In a world of changes, like the swirling currents of a troubled sea, great gratitude should be felt

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that there is a “rock” of Truth, firm and immovable, upon which the devout of all ages can stand, knowing that the tides of human opinions are of no account, and can pass them by without hurt.

The Truth derives this unique quality from its Author; from God in whom there is “no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” How pitiable would be the state of man if the Creator were subject to all the fickleness and folly of human beings.

Taking a broad view of the religious world, Christendom is seen as nothing more than “folly set in great dignity.” Where there is absence of the Truth, then grand music, and colourful pageantry with other trappings are used to make the counterfeit appear real and impressive. The sham is quickly exposed. The Christianity of Christendom is no more than human philosophy tinged with a few drops of the words of Christ, which may deceive the thoughtless, but to those who desire the unchangeable Truth it is obvious that Christendom is astray.

To show the unchanging Truth has ever been in existence from the beginning, it is recorded that:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” John 1 : 1.

The divine “Word” is the unfaltering vehicle of the Spirit or power of God, either for Creation or declaration of the Truth. “And God said,” is the announcement preceding each day’s work of creation (Genesis 1). “God spake and it was done.” Such is the wondrous power of God’s Word, emanating from Him, and as part of Him gives to Creation all the manifest glory and beauty seen in the heavens and in the earth.

The Ecclesia of old were given the fount of wisdom in the inspired words of Moses:

“Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.”

Deuteronomy 6 : 4.

Here is unity, unbroken unity, divine unity; and from this unity springs the never changing purpose of God in calling to Himself a faithful people from the time of Abel to the end of the present dispensation. Throughout this long time of nearly six thousand years the basis of salvation has been the same. Faith in the One God of Israel, is the principle by which simple men are made “just” in the sight of God through the Redeemer. For the “just shall live

by faith.” How marvellously simple is the way of the Creator for making a diverse people, called out of every “nation, kindred and tongue” to be perfectly one. The transcendent and sublime feature of the Redeemed is that although they have been called out from many nations over a long period of time, when they are gathered together it will be at once manifest that they have shared the same hope, the same faith, and have rejoiced in serving the same God. Although as individuals they will have been separated in their probation by many generations, and divided by speaking different languages, the Truth with its intrinsic unity will bring them together in one—in Christ. To contemplate the possibility of being with the faithful who are redeemed is most uplifting; to know that there will be immediate unity of heart and mind with brethren like Noah, Moses, David and the Prophets and the Apostles gives the Truth the ascendancy over all powers, in being able to make such a diverse people “perfectly one.”

Christendom are entirely ignorant of such a possibility, because they believe that God has handed to them a superior Spirit or power than given to the Fathers. Christendom despises the Law, so they can never come to know the glorious unity of the purpose of God.

Now the “others”—those who once had the Truth—are the self-confessed disparagers of the Law. Having left the Truth they can join hands with Christendom in treating the Law as distasteful, and of little or no spiritual value. The truth, which the responsible of these will be caused to realise to their shame and everlasting contempt, is that the faithful of all ages have partaken of the same Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. To suppose that present-day professors of Truth are treated by God to a better Spirit, than was Abel or Moses is a dreadful and blasphemous conceit.

“All did eat the same spiritual meat.”

1 Corinthians 10 : 3.

The Apostle Paul makes the unity of the Truth shine as he shows those called in all ages were given the same Truth in Christ.

“Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

And were all baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." 1 Corinthians 10 : 1-4.

The "meat" which sustained the Ecclesia in the wilderness was not given solely for their natural sustenance; but that the Ecclesia might look upon the miraculous provision of bread from heaven as "spiritual meat" to strengthen their faith in the coming of the Messiah, the Christ. It is in this sense they partook of Christ, just as completely and really as those called in the present dispensation may partake of Him. "God is no respecter of persons." God is just. To each generation He gives the same Truth, the same spiritual food, the same Christ.

It must have been an awesome experience for the Ecclesia when they complained because they were without food, and were told they would see the glory of God at eventide. Just as Aaron was speaking to them the Ecclesia looked towards the wilderness, and, "behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud." What an experience! Then at even the "quails came up." Here was divinely provided meat. To the impressionable minds there would be no mistaking the lesson. A vision of God's glory seen and believed led to a partaking of God-given food. This would more than sustain the body. It was also "spiritual meat" teaching that God could and would provide for the life that now is; and, also, for the future life in the promised Redeemer, the Christ.

To get up the next morning, and watch the sun rise over the desert, observe the dew sparkling in its rays, was a further experience with a glorious lesson. For no sooner had the dew "gone up," when "behold, there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground." The Ecclesia exclaimed: "It is manna," or "What is this." It is a portion (from the Lord). Moses told them:

"This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat."

Exodus 16 : 15.

For six days this phenomenon was seen; but not on the seventh. The lesson was that the manna was a type of the Redeemer to come, of Christ, who would be the "spiritual meat" for His people for six days, each day of a thousand years, then on the seventh He will be with them in person, and they will be joined to Him on the Sabbath, the "rest which remaineth for the people of God."

As the manna was gathered it was observed that some gathered more, some gathered less, but—

“He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack.” Exodus 16 : 18.

There was an omer, or tenth part of an ephah, for everyone; an adequate supply for each. The practical lesson was that everyone who gathered may have the same — the Christ — the bread from heaven sent by God.

The unity of the Truth is seen in that those who were the Ecclesia in the wilderness were blessed with the Christ. Just as much as those called to the Truth at the present time, that all may eventually be united in Him, having had the same hope and understanding of the will of God.

“**And all did drink the same spiritual drink.**” I Corinthians 10 : 4.

The Apostle adds:

“For they drank of that spiritual Rock that **followed** them: and that Rock was Christ.”

If the Ecclesia in the wilderness drank of Christ, can we do better?

The Apostle says:

“And have been all made to drink into (of) one Spirit.”

1 Corinthians 12 : 13.

Although this was written to the Ecclesia in Corinth, and to present Ecclesias, we can see that it is equally applicable to the Ecclesia in the wilderness.

The glorious feature of the unity of the Truth, is that we may go to the earlier records, knowing and feeling a part of the experiences of the time, and receive the same lessons as were given at that time.

The Ecclesia had come to Rephidim where there was no water. Thirst is perhaps a more dreadful pang than hunger. The people were distraught and were ready to stone Moses. An appeal to the Lord was answered. Moses was told to go to Horeb, strike the Rock, when water would come out. But how much? Would it be sufficient for two million people and their cattle? The record of the Apostle supplies the answer, showing how we may benefit by fitting together different parts of the Word to give us a complete picture. Paul tells us:

“They drank of that Spiritual Rock that **followed** them: and that Rock was Christ.” I Corinthians 10 : 4.

What "followed" them, or as the margin says, "went with them"? It could not be the stone of the rock. This would have been of no benefit. It was the waters of the Rock which gushed out forming a stream or river, winding its way through the desert and accompanying Israel in their journeying, providing life-giving water to the brethren, sisters and their children.

The water was literal, an essential to the present life. The Apostle emphasises, however, that the Rock provided "the **same** spiritual drink." Presumably, he says the "same" because this was the "spiritual drink" he desired the Ecclesia in Corinth and the present Ecclesias to drink. How important can be one word of divine writ!

The Ecclesia in the wilderness were told that God was their "Rock," and now we can see that they would be taught by drinking of the waters from the Rock, that God would grant them a Redeemer who would give them living water.

For Jesus said:

"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John 4:14.

This important Truth the Ecclesia in the wilderness learned in a very practical way. Without the water which God miraculously provided all the brethren and sisters would have died in the wilderness. Those waters which came from the Rock saved them from death. The lesson to them as well as to ourselves is that the "spiritual drink," the water that Christ provides will give life for ever to those who drink in faith.

The waters given by man in his theories and philosophies are never satisfying. They fail to quench the thirst for righteousness and truth. Each day there are new ideas, new policies which are claimed to be absolutely satisfying. The drinking of these may give temporary satisfaction, but soon the tongue of the people is as parched as ever. Only when the waters from the Rock, from Christ are found can there be a real satisfying, so that the words of Jesus are realised to be true:

"Whosoever shall drink of the waters that I shall give him shall never thirst." John 4:14.

Christendom dwells in an arid and waterless desert. Thirst plagues her millions. No water from the Rock satisfies the thirst.

The waters of their preachers with their theorising and philosophies tend to confuse more than satisfy.

The “others”—with their many confessed doubts, and disputes are athirst. They are told by their leaders that with a little patience the doubts and disputes will be settled by the waters which eventually will be given to them. But nothing happens. The Rock is far from them. Thirst, tormenting thirst persists. To those among them who come to realise the glorious unity of the purpose of God shedding a divine light upon all parts of His Word, and providing for each generation the same wonderful truth in Christ, there may be a turning to the Rock. To such the invitation of the Spirit is:

“Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Revelation 22 : 17.

Let it be carefully noted that these life giving waters will never be found in a body which has lost contact with the Rock, with Christ.

(To be continued . . .)

The Gospel

Judges Four Hundred Years.

HISTORY is a repetition, for the most part, of man's failures. The history of the people of God is particularly so. In adversity God is sought; supplication to him for help and deliverance and blessing is made. Then when God has blessed His people and they are at ease, little by little they decline from His ways, and suddenly the break comes and there is a gulf between them and the God of Heaven.

Joshua was a faithful leader, he remained true to the charge which had been given to him after the death of Moses, but this could not be strictly said of Israel as a whole. The land which had been promised was to be theirs entirely, but only if they showed the necessary godly enthusiasm in acquiring it. They failed to do this, choosing the easy way of making agreements with those who dwelt in the land, and this meant, as a consequence, that the many idolatrous sites of the Canaanitish worship were left standing. There could only be one result of this inaction. God would not help them if they would not play their part.

“Ye have not obeyed my voice . . . wherefore . . . 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, vv. 2-3.)

Israel were dominant now, but through their own lack, not the complete victors. Nevertheless the land was enjoyable. In the north from the rich green plains of the Mediterranean Sea to the hilly but fertile land running south from the River Leontes stretched the territory of the tribes of Asher and Naphtali. Southward again lay the territories of the other tribes, there was the beautiful Plain of Sharon, the vale of Sorek, and the hilly Shephelah where there were fine olive groves and vineyards; and along the rich coastal plain continuing southward, grain grew abundantly.

In this prosperity they began to forget the Living God and commenced to intermarry with the inhabitants of the land. In the wake of such action came the serving of Baalim and Ashtaroth (the Easter goddess) and the groves; for the aliens they joined introduced their own particular worship.

God was displeased at such backsliding. The nation which had been called to be a witness to His Truth must be punished.

“And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and He delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and He sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies . . . and they were greatly distressed. Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. And yet they would not hearken unto their judges—they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked . . .” (Judges 2, vv. 14-17.)

Time after time Israel came to a very low ebb. Then in His mercy, God would raise up a national leader or a tribal leader and help him to overcome the enemy. As a result there would be a revival of the true worship, but when the judge died they reverted back to their idolatrous practices.

This state of affairs continued for a period of four hundred years to the days of the last and greatest of the judges, namely Samuel the prophet.

Samuel came just at the right time. In his day Israel were living in a period of grave crisis. The Philistines, a well organised hard-

fighting people living on the sea coast, whose destructive reputation lives on in the present day expression which means an indifference to culture, were preparing to take over Israel. But not only was there this threat from without, but also there was great wickedness in the leadership within, which constituted a far greater danger. The sons of the High Priest, Eli at Shiloh, who in the ordinary way would have succeeded their father, proved themselves to be absolutely worthless. God in His mercy removed these wicked men by the sword of the Philistines allowing the Ark of the Covenant to be taken by the enemy for a short time as a token of His displeasure. It was at this time of disaster, when "Ichabod" was the cry; that is, the "glory is departed"; because the ark of God was taken, that Samuel stepped into the breach:

" . . . Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth . . . and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only; and He will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." (Judges 7, v. 3.)

The people responded to the exhortation of Samuel. This man judged Israel all the days of his life and it is recorded that "the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel." But what a lesson is obtained from the account of the taking of the Ark. At the time of Eli the worship of Israel was merely lip-service; for their hearts had gone after those errors that belonged outside and they had brought them into their midst. Through this they lost that which spoke of God's dwelling with them. Can the principle be any different today if there is a mixing of the profane with the holy? Where this takes place, the Ark (Christ) is removed, lost, and the enemy (the flesh) triumphs.

D.L.

(To be continued . . .)

"The Signs of His Coming and of the end of the World"

"FOR IT IS A DAY OF TROUBLE, AND OF TREADING DOWN, AND OF PERPLEXITY BY THE LORD GOD OF HOSTS IN THE VALLEY OF VISION, BREAKING DOWN THE WALLS, AND OF CRYING TO THE MOUNTAINS." (Isaiah 22, v. 5.)

THE Hebrew word which is rendered "perplexity" in the above quotation has the alternative rendering of "entanglement." The

prophecy like many of the prophecies had its application to the sorrows that came upon ancient Israel. The forces of Elam and Kir of which the prophet speaks, identifies the Mesopotamian enemy.

Even as the Spirit uttered its warning the people carelessly lived their existence.

“What do you mean that you have gone up, all of you, to the housetops you who are full of shoutings, tumultuous city exultant town” (verses 1-2 RSV).

But if that was the condition in Israel at the time, what of the other nations around them? The troubles that came upon the nation of God came upon many other countries as well, and is an indication that the prophecy has a fitting application for these modern times.

How complicated and entangled are the affairs of all nations in these days. Never before have there been so many difficulties, because human nature seems to be in a frenzy of argumentative disagreement.

Newspapers have only to be vaguely perused to perceive a host of suggestions for putting national and international matters right. One suggests a certain course of action, another criticises that line of reasoning and propounds another view. Charges and counter charges are made; and the voice of an articulate and vociferous section of the world communities is heard to be grumbling about everything. It is the beginning of the breakdown of what little order man has been able to achieve over his affairs.

International finance is shaking, confidence in certain currencies is uncertain. Values fluctuate, and speculation is rife. But the dark clouds of uncertainty that hang over the world of commerce is but one aspect of a world entanglement which will never be unravelled by man.

Is it not amazing in this age of great achievement in some directions, that man has never found the knowledge of how to rule himself to the benefit of world stability and mutual welfare? Guidance to this end is ever available in the word of God, but man does not want that guidance because his own selfish interests predominate continually.

Is it any wonder then that the disillusioned younger generation do not improve in their standards of behaviour? The cry now is being raised that it must be ensured that the next generation has more

guidance from its elders. But if the present generation has been lacking in guidance how can it possibly be in the best state to guide those it is expected will succeed it? A social worker of reputable experience, speaking recently said that:—

“The emergency premissiveness of the war years had not been replaced after 1945 with a modern interpretation of the best pre-war standards. Too many parents offered no help from their own experience. The social upheaval of the war, with its aftermath of overcrowded housing and disrupted family life, had been accompanied by ethical and social change. The low standards of commercial entertainment were boosted by advertising, and gambling was encouraged by law. Too few adults made any effort to provide alternative standards; the Churches had failed to re-interpret eternal truths. . . .

These were the sins of the older generations and young people were growing up without an ‘inner armour,’ under the constant threat of war.”

What an admission! Like in the days of ancient Israel danger looms ahead, but the people go on living carelessly, boisterously, and inconsiderate of the poor example they give to young people who are bound to suffer. So the young people become as careless and indifferent to world conditions as their elders. One, a young man of 20 who admitted having taken drugs, and been in trouble with the police on occasions was quoted to say, “They accuse me of not being interested in politics. I find the war in Vietnam repulsive, but what can I do about it? It is so obvious that any “ruin” (adult) ought to be able to understand why we are not interested in long-term projects.”

In this context the prophecy of Isaiah aptly applies.

“. . . let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we shall die: and it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts. Surely thine iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord God of Hosts.” (Isaiah 22, vv. 13-14.)

Yes, instead of the adverse situation being straitened out it gets more entangled; and the admonishment from the Word of God is that the day of trouble and perplexity which is coming is what is deserved and needed.

In Vietnam a further tangled situation is perceived. The United States finds itself embroiled in a conflict which in a sense is a civil

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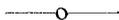
war. The government they uphold in Saigon is weak; as a result there is unrest; demonstrations against it, and disorder. The Buddhists, the Catholics, the intellectuals and the peasants are all wondering what kind of government will eventually be set up; and all the time the dreadful incursions and intrusions from the communist north inflict death, injury and the anguish of fear.

America pursues its anti-communist policies; but is it unravelling the complex situation in Vietnam? Meanwhile the world looks on, some agreeing, and some disagreeing, even in the Western camp, with United States policy there. It is so to speak the world situation of perplexity in miniature; heralding the "breaking down of walls and the crying to the mountains," the lifting up of the voices of distress as a result of the breaking down, with none to save.

But the prophecy takes the mind forward beyond the gloom to a picture of hope.

" . . . it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim (' God is setting up'—Christ) . . . and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah: And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder . . . And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." (Isaiah 22, vv. 20-23.)

Christ will banish uncertainty, insecurity, disruption and perplexity for all time. D.I.



Correspondence

Letter from the Editor of the "Dawn" Magazine.

" I notice that the September issue of your Magazine records the withdrawal from three of your members. Does this mean that these three people are no longer members of the One Body, and that unless they return to you, their rejection at the Judgment Seat is certain? Your explanation may help me to understand what you believe to be the 'true doctrine of fellowship.'"

Reply.

Your question is answered very simply by the Lord Jesus:

“ If he neglect to hear the church (Ecclesia), let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”

We dare not alter the view expressed by the Lord Jesus concerning those withdrawn from. “ Heathen men and publicans ” are already judged by the Lord Jesus as being outside His Body, and without hope unless they are allowed to return.

Withdrawal is a “ cutting off ” by the sword of the Spirit. Jesus says so:

“ If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee.” Matthew 18 : 8.

By your teaching you have blunted this sword, and allowed it to remain rusting in its sheath, saying perhaps it may not even be used at the Judgment Seat on those you have supposed to “ cut off ” !

Such failure to perceive the teaching of Jesus may seem charitable, but it is neither helpful to the erring nor to the Body. On the contrary Jesus explains in the context of the above quotation that if a member offends, and is not “ cut off,” the Body will be “ cast into hell fire.” This is because the Body becomes corrupted by the false members which are allowed to remain. Christ’s solemn warning is that the many bodies who once had the Truth and have failed to “ cut off ” (and this means “ cut off ” by the sword of the Spirit) will be destroyed in the “ lake of fire ” when He returns—whatever may be their profession.

May we appeal to you to grasp the Sword of the Spirit as Jesus requires, that the rebel may be warned of his certain fate, and that “ all the Ecclesia may hear and fear.” Then there may be a coming together in the One Body, which is our earnest desire for the salvation of yourself and those with you.

Believing this teaching of the Lord Jesus, the answer to your question must be “ that these three people are no longer members of the One Body, and unless they return . . . their rejection at the Judgment Seat is certain.”

W.V.B.

News from the Ecclesias

Eden, New York. Grange Hall, Church Street.

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

We rejoice at evidence of God's hand in the calling out of two more to the saving name of Jesus.

All here look forward to the Sunday School Outing planned, God willing, for September 17th.

All join in gratitude for the love and care shown to the visitors which has made their visit a benefit and brings all closer in the bond of His Spirit.

J.A.DeF.

Pentrip, Black Rock, Portmadoc.

Breaking of Bread: Sundays, 11.0 a.m. Eureka Class:
Thursday, 7.0 p.m.

It was a great privilege to have the company of our Sis. Carter and Sis. Lois Carter from the States and to meet with them at the Table of the Lord on Sunday, August 14th.

Also present were Bro. and Sis. D. Lancaster, Bro. S. Lancaster and Bro. J. Smith from Manchester, and we wish to thank them all for benefits received.

—per J.S.

Newtownards, Co. Down, N. Ireland.

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

We were glad to have the company of Bro. and Sister W. G. Butterfield last month and thank Bro. Geoffrey for his help on Sunday morning in exhortation.

It was a great pleasure having Sister Carter and Sister Loie visit us for a few days, also to hear from them of those in the U.S.A. to whom we are bound so closely in the bonds of love and hope in Christ.

To those who were privileged to be at the Manchester fraternal, it was with much joy we met our newly baptised Bro. and Sister Hill, who have been called out from the "others." —J.P.

Nottingham. Community Centre, Kirkewhite Street, Nottingham.

Breaking of Bread 11.0 a.m. Bible Class 12.30 p.m. Tuesday, Prophetic and Eureka Classes 7.30 p.m.

We are forcibly reminded here of the frailty of this mortal frame, though fearfully and wonderfully made. The ecclesial activities have become somewhat limited because of the infirmities of the flesh. None-the-less four of our number were able to attend the fraternal gathering at Manchester and shared in those good things which sustain the children of God in their wilderness pilgrimage.

F.H.

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.

On August 29th we were privileged to have our Fraternal Gathering, when three exhortations were given on the subject of: "Made perfect in one." "Separation." "Sanctification." "Unification." Most of the Ecclesias were represented, and it was felt that a very uplifting time was spent, considering how we may be one now, and in His mercy become "perfectly one" for ever. Such a contemplation sustains faith, and gives joy to our hope, for with whom would we ever wish to be, but with those who as the Body of the Son of God are "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment?"

Friday, September 2nd, saw the end of the sojourn in this country of Sis. Carter and Sis. Lois Carter from the States. Many were present at Manchester Airport to say, "God Speed." These are moments of great emotion. Tears filled many eyes, but there is comfort in the promise that the time will come when there will be no more parting, and "God will wipe away all tears from our eyes."

Sis. Ellen Brown was withdrawn from on August 25th. Efforts "to gain" by the one seeing her alone, then by "witnesses," and

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finally by the Ecclesia, having failed the painful duty to “cut off” was necessary. It is God who puts leprosy in the “house” (Leviticus 14 : 34) for the manifestation of sin, and the testing of faith whether the leprous stones will be removed to an “unclean place.” No one could rightly contend that there is any hope in an “unclean place.”

Thanks be to God that other “lively stones” have been allowed to take the place of the defiled ones. With joy, which we know is shared by the angels in heaven, we witnessed the baptism “into the death of Christ” on Saturday, August 27th, of Michael Hill and his wife Pauline. Formerly “Dawn” Christadelphians, their gratitude knows no bounds for being delivered from the “letter” so that they can rejoice in the Spirit. Mercifully, God at this time has shown them His presence in a most remarkable way on behalf of our Sister in respect of her employment. Working at a missile factory, it was realised that this was incompatible with the Truth. In making a stand it was thought employment must finish. However, due to His loving-kindness our Sister was transferred, in remarkable circumstances, to non-war work. This has been an exhortation to us all to be “strong and of a good courage,” so that the living power of the following words of the Almighty can be felt: “Then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and thou shalt have good success.”

W.V.B.

