

NOVEMBER 1968

A Monthly Magazine issued by

# 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"**

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AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

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SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

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## At the Table of the Lord

**“In the last days perilous times shall come”**

**B**rethren and sisters, how much is revealed in the Scriptures to help us to be prepared in the constant warfare against the flesh. In his Word is everything needed for this struggle, if we can seek and receive it.

An example is found in our portion read today in II Timothy 3:1, where the Apostle Paul writes :

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.”

As we reflect upon these words — God’s graciousness in warning of the last day’s is brought home. **“This also . . .”** In addition to all the teaching concerning His son, Jesus, and the Kingdom of God of which the Gospel speaks, God reveals signs to alert His people, lest they be overwhelmed. These times are revealed as “perilous.” When we examine this word, we find it comes from a root meaning **to lower or let down**, and gives the thought of strength being decreased or reduced. It is used as “fierce” as well as “perilous.” To help a fuller understanding, let us consider Matthew 8:28, where we read:

“And when he (Jesus) was come . . . , there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding **fierce**, so that no man might pass by that way.”

Here was peril, so exceeding that man’s strength was reduced by fear. This will help to illustrate the result of these perilous times. By the power of the Spirit, Jesus was able to cast out the devils, making the situation no longer fierce or perilous.

In the same way in the last days, when the perilous times come, the power of the Spirit can help make us less vulnerable, and so the times less perilous, if we are striving to be subject to that spirit.

To help us discern the closeness of these perilous times, the Spirit through Paul’s writing, describes the last days :

“ . . . lovers of their own selves . . . disobedient to parents . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.”

(II Timothy 3:2-5)

These words describe so accurately our own times, brethren and sisters. All we have to do is to read the headlines in our newspapers, look at the advertisements, talk to those around us in the world. When we do, how easily we discern that the days are evil, the times are perilous, and we need to be alert, watchful, strengthened,

lest we lose the strength we have, and succumb to these perils, which can so easily take us away from the Way of Life..

Throughout the Scriptures, we find warnings against these perilous times, which have come, and are a sign of the last days. One such warning is found in I John 2:18.

“Little children, **it is the last time** : and as ye have heard that anti-christ shall come, even now are there many anti-christs; whereby we know it **IS** the last time ”

There can be no doubt of the seriousness of the Scriptures' warning to us; there can be no doubt that the scriptural description of the last times, the perilous times, fits our own days! Let us heed the warnings given, let us strengthen our alertness, our determination to be strong, to withstand the anti-christs which are so numerous and so close to us

### “A form of godliness”

The anti-christs take on many subtle forms — often having the appearance of godliness ! Of this, Paul warns us :

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof . . . ” (II Timothy 3:5).

A “form of godliness” — the word implies semblance or shape —the appearance. When casually looked upon, it appears godly, but close examination shows that it is only a form, for the power of godliness is denied by the acts of those having only the form. Paul warns of the Pharisees who had such a form :

“Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God . . . which hast a form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.” (Romans 2:17-20).

The Pharisees knew only the letter of the law; the **spirit**, the power of it, was missing from their living, and as a consequence, they were condemned by the Lord Jesus.

Christians today have a “form of godliness — many are “good living” people; seem devout; claim the name of Christ — but do not know the spirit of the Truth, and consequently it is not, indeed cannot, be a power in their lives.

But these things can apply to ourselves, brethren and sisters, for we can have a “form of godliness” if we are not subject to the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Truth — thereby denying the power of that Spirit in our living. The word **power** comes from a root meaning “to be able” and is used often as **miracle, mighty work, strength**. It

is the mightiness of that power which can make our living conform to what God would have us be; can help us to conform to the image of His Son, the Lord Jesus, who allowed that same power to govern ALL his living.

We must ask ourselves, then. "Do we allow that power to rule in us?" If so, we are privileged to be the brethren of Christ, in the hope of eternal life. If not, then, like the world, like the Pharisees, there is a "form of godliness," but the power is denied.

### **"Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse"**

How easily we can be deceived! How powerful are the forces striving to lure us away from the Truth! If the power is not there to keep us, soon we will be overwhelmed. Paul warns us of this still speaking of the "last days,"

" . . . Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." (II Timothy 3:13)

With all the evil we see so clearly about us, indeed growing worse and worse, the dangers are very great.

However, God in His Graciousness, has given us an antidote to the poison which could easily take away our hope of eternal life. Paul is very clear concerning the force which helps us to combat this evil:

"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." (II Timothy 3:14)

The things learned were learned of the Spirit, not of Paul. If therefore, we are able to continue in the things which we have learned, we are helped to conquer that which seeks to deceive and so destroy the people of God. Paul continues:

" . . . from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are **able** to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (verse 15).

It is the Word of God which **enables** us to stand against the evil and deception which is so close.. The word "able" in Paul's letter, is the same root word as "power" in denying the power thereof." It is the power of the scriptures, the power of His Word, the power of his Spirit which makes us able to be wise unto salvation. Can we see how vital it is to our eternal life that we do not "deny the power thereof" — but rather, to continue in the help given for our living in the Holy Scriptures? If it is a true power in our living, if we are accordingly living in subjection to His Word, we are cared for protected, instructed, helped to resist the wiles of the adversary.

Paul continues to help further:-

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness . . .” (verse 16).

To those who receive it, the scriptures are profitable, or as the word means, helpful, advantageous, indeed are essential for our eternal life !

### “ . . . For Doctrine . . . ”

Paul's words tell us that they are profitable for **doctrine**. Doctrine, we find, comes from a word meaning to teach; so we are to gain doctrine by the law, the prophets, and the Psalms; by Jesus Himself. What the Scriptures teach from the beginning to the end, is the Gospel. By application of these doctrines, we are helped to resist the evil all about us; helped to survive spiritually in these perilous times; and we will not be carried away. Paul continues:

“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to **doctrine** . . . Take heed unto thyself, and unto the **doctrine**; continue in them: for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.” (I Timothy 4:13-16).

What greater help can we find than this — “Save thyself” — for this means really, **SUBMIT** yourself

### “ . . . For reproof . . . ”

The Word of God is “profitable for reproof,” Paul tells us. **Reproof** involves convincing, correcting, rebuking, as we find in the original word. To help us discern this, we read in Ephesians 5:11--

“ . . . have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, (a doctrine) but rather **reprove** them.”

**From** this scripture, how much we are helped to see clearly the vital doctrine of fellowship. In addition, we are able from the scriptures to give evidence which reprove, corrects, rebukes, convicts any who walk contrary to the Word.

It begins with ourselves. However, let us remember that it is **NOT** ourselves who reprove, but rather, the Word of God which shows the wrong. If the Word is refused, it is clearly the power of it that is denied — exhibiting that any who do such, have only the “form of godliness”

### “ . . . For correction . . . ”

Profitable . . . correction.” What is involved here to help us in these perilous times? **Correction** we find means to be **set straight**

**again.** How much we as natural men need to be set straight again, for we fail, we sin, we fall! The Scriptures can set us straight again: correct us. They are profitable for this. **IF** we yield to them when we know we need correction. They can bring us right again, returning us to the straight and narrow way which leads to the Kingdom of God even through these perilous times.

“... **For instruction in righteousness** ...”

Instruction involves training, as in the thought of training up a child in the way he should go. A child needs constant training, for he knows nothing of himself, and his parents have the responsibility of training him in the right way; to show him how he should go. This figure carries over to ourselves, brethren and sisters, for we as children of God, need training up in the way we must go, if we are to please God. How gracious is our father to grant his “instructions in righteousness!”

Again, Paul helps us —

“... fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the **nurture** and admonition of the Lord.”  
(Ephesians 6:4)

Nurture is the same word as instruction. As a faithful father watches over and nurtures his child, so our God nurtures us, instructs us in righteousness from the Scriptures. The nurturing involves chastening, correction; not to hurt, but to instruct in the way of righteousness, and always with unfeigned love. It reminds us of Hebrews 12:11 —

“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of **righteousness** unto them which are exercised thereby.”

Is this the **instruction in righteousness** we can find in His Word, which is so needful in our struggle to be obedient children ?

As we meditate upon these gifts given to us by an all-wise Father, through His servant, Paul, perhaps we can begin to perceive how great is our **BLESSING**, that we know such loving care!

It is his purpose that “the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished (equipped) unto all good works.”

Brethren and sisters, every possible help is given to us! Let us be sure that we value, seek, and receive it—knowing that our salvation in these perilous times depends upon it.

Our lives are busy, so full, that it takes much “sweat of the brow” to earn our living. The pressures of these times seem great;

the calls upon our time, even when we are separate from the world, are constant. Nevertheless, let us draw near and take care, watching over one another. The perils are severe, but the provision by a Father who nurtures is ample. Let us then, as grateful children, partake of it with faith and constancy.

J.A.DeF.

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## Marriage

### And with a reference to the present contention on Divorce

**T**he Word of God is the only source of information on the true purpose of marriage. Men know that it is for the procreation of children, but can see nothing more than this being a means of providing another generation to maintain the fast flowing tide of humans pouring into the grave; ever filling but never full.

God's revelation of the divine figure to be seen in marriage is resplendent with kindness exhibiting a glorious and eternal work, which will enfold all who are His in an unbreakable union with his Son.

Creation witnesses to this purpose, as it does in so many ways. Unseen by the world, these are a source of strength and joy to God's people. What is it which in every part of the inhabited world, attracts a man to a maid? Who sees in her the fulfillment of all his hopes and aspirations? While she by looking to him for protection and a "covering" makes his desire not only possessive but exclusive. This force of attraction is as powerful as any magnet, whose drawing force cannot be seen, but is certainly there as it pulls a piece of steel, a "Keeper" to itself. Such a power or force of mutual attraction is of God, and is beyond human understanding or explanation. Minds not bewitched by the present pornography will understand this as expressed by the Spirit :

"There are three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not . . . The way of a man with a maid."  
(Proverbs 30:19)

This divine gift, and it is a gift, was ordained from the beginning from the time of Eden:

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife : and they shall be one flesh."  
(Genesis 2:24)

This union in the first place was for the bringing forth of children, who, feeling secure by parents being joined together in true and unselfish love, might be nourished in the characteristics which God desires. Let the emphasis not only be on love, but on unselfish love.

There is nothing a man would not do to please his future wife; or the maid her future husband. What a school for teaching unselfishness, which in a true union is carried into marriage, there to be the silent but most powerful teacher of the children. By coming to know such love, such dedication, children are tutored in the rudiments of godliness, enabling them at the right age to look to the One who has so richly blessed them with fatherly love, so telling them without words that The Father is love.

### Marriage a divine figure

Adam was given a wife by God taking a "rib" from his side, and creating woman :

"And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto man

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." (Genesis 2:2-23).

This pointed to a people of God who would be given to His Son as a bride. They were to be taken out of mankind, and in a special sense from the side of the second Adam, so that they were part of Him, part of His Body.

When Jesus was crucified His side was pierced, and out of it came "blood and water." The blood of His life, the only life that was sinless in spite of every temptation to sin. This blood was no different in nature from any other blood. As it trickled down His side and fell to the ground it would congeal in the same manner as all blood. Because it was the life of God's Son who had never sinned, it gave fulfilment to all the offering of the faithful from the beginning.

Adam would know with abject poignancy, that sin merited death; that nakedness must be covered. He would also know that the animal slain to provide a covering was not sufficient in itself to deliver from death. He would see, however, in the slain animal the lesson that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins," and that this blood foretold of the One through whom there was the opportunity of being accounted righteous, and so of having the hope of life.

In a figure God's people become acceptable by being covered with this blood; this life which was sinless.

Under the old covenant, the Ecclesia assembled at Sinai, were inducted into a covenant with God by the blood of a slain animal being placed upon them at the same time as upon the Law and the altar. This blood, this life was seen to foretell of the life of the Redeemer which would be revealed in the Law, and seen at the altar so that through their confession of deserving death there might be the hope of life through Him whom the altar represented.

After Christ, the ordinance of the new covenant was baptism for the deliverance of men and women from the world. It was not by accident that when Christ's side was pierced, out came "blood and water." Did space permit references could be made to this association of blood and water, showing that both are used as representative of the life of Christ. This was seen in the wilderness when water was miraculously provided from the Rock. The Apostle Paul says that this Rock, "which followed them was Christ." Not, of course that, the Rock moved, but the waters which came from the Rock gushed out becoming a stream or river giving life to Israel in their wanderings in the desert.

In baptism, the water in a figure is a grave. In this the one to be baptised is buried "into the death of Christ;" a confession of the justice in burying the "old man," and acknowledging that the death of Christ showed God was right in condemning to death all including His Son. If the one immersed were to remain in the water a literal death would quickly ensue. Coming out of the water a "new creature" is born. Now the water assumes the figure of the life, the blood of Christ, covering the one making an acceptable confession, and granting him a new life in Christ.

More could be written to show the continuity of the divine figure in the "water and the blood," by which a people will eventually be saved; a nation will be born in a day; a bride will have been prepared and adorned for her husband.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out!" (Romans 11:33).

### **Divine teaching on Divorce**

It seems a dreadful chilling plunge from the lofty heights where the pure and clean air of God's wisdom can fill the being, to have

come down to the dank and fetid swamps of "divorce." The task although distasteful, seems necessary in order to help perplexed minds deliver themselves from the toils of vain and wordy arguments.

There has just come to hand a booklet entitled: "Marriage, Divorce and Re marriage," published by the Advocate Group, and which has been issued in the "hope that the brotherhood will be strengthened by the counsel offered."

Who constitute the "brotherhood" is not stated. It would appear that any Group professing the name, however much in error are regarded as part of the "brotherhood;" which is a contradiction of the view put forth that those guilty of adultery should be withdrawn from. When those in error, be they few or many are expelled according to the commands of Christ can they still be part of those who have righteously cut them off? The answer is obvious.

The booklet, while not reaching all the conclusions required by the Truth, may have a purging influence. So far, so good; but is this enough to deliver a people from the darkness of apostasy?

Let us now look at the teaching of Christ in which some claim to have found a permissiveness to gratify their desires. Wisdom requires that we look at the teaching of Christ as a whole, remembering that one part is complementary to another. In the approach to any investigation it is best first to remove obstacles to a clear understanding; one of which is:—

### **"The Exceptive Clause."**

"But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." (Matthew 5:32).

Superficially read, this seems to indicate that "fornication" which here appears to be synonymous with adultery, allows for "putting away." Hence, Gentile commentators and those who have lost the Truth have understood this to be the "exceptive clause" to the forbidding of "putting away."

Careful consideration will show this is not the case, and that the simple meaning of Christ's words is:

"Whosoever shall put away his wife, causes his wife to commit adultery, unless, as is obvious, she is already guilty of this as indicated by the words 'saving (or except) for the cause of fornication.'"

In other words the cause could not be the “putting away” if the wife were already guilty.

This is a clear teaching of Jesus which allows for no “exceptive clause.” Any ambiguity which may be felt with regard to the foregoing is clearly resolved by the record in Mark Chapter 10:

“What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.” (verses 9.11.12).

Here, without qualifications, “putting away” and remarrying is completely forbidden.

The fullest account of Jesus’ teaching is given in Matthew chapter 19:

“Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female.

And said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh.

Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

(verses 4.5.6).

So that the disciples of Christ (and this includes all who are disciplined by Christ) will bow to the divine teaching and heartily endorse by word and action the words of Jesus.

Continuing the account of the discourse:

“They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

He sayeth unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.” (verses 7.8.9).

The disciples realised immediately the effect of this teaching when they said:

“If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.” (verse 10).

Could the words of Jesus be more powerful to show that remarriage by one who desires to enter the Kingdom of God is forbidden? He said:

“All men cannot receive this saying, save they whom it is given.

For there are some eunuchs, which are born from their mother’s womb; and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men; and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.” (verses 11:12).

Only those desiring to please the flesh by seeking divorce so that they can remarry will try and explain away such a simple teaching; a teaching which will always be upheld in the One Body because the heart-desire is to enter the Kingdom of heaven. With the prop of the “exceptive clause” out of the way, nothing is left for the teaching of any license regarding divorce. Full and unqualified endorsement of divine teaching remains unimpaired and undiluted, that:

“What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

### Divorce in the Law

Why was this permitted as stated by Jesus? He says:

“Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so.” (verse 8).

It is obvious that certain things were allowed or “suffered” by God in a nation who were in the process of being brought to Christ. For example more than one wife was not only permitted, but in the case of David were given to him by God:

“And I gave thee my master’s house, and thy master’s wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.” (2 Samuel 12:8).

Yet, when Christ came polygamy was forbidden. He required that in the Ecclesia the type of one man, one wife should be honoured

The law allowed divorce as stated in Deuteronomy chapter 24 verse 1.

“When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it comes to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.”

It can only be assumed that was the “uncleanliness” or “matter of nakedness.” Could it not be that the man had been deceived into thinking he was being given a virgin, and then this was found not to be the case? Perhaps a widow, or perhaps a willing or unwilling victim of assault, without the fact being disclosed to the prospective husband. This shows that marriage was not recognised when the woman had so deceived. Divorce in this case was in the nature of a failure to ratify the marriage due to deceit, or “hardness of heart.” The “putting away” was not to be capricious, but was to be certified by a “bill of divorcement.” Jesus makes it clear that even this was not to be permitted as a ground for “putting away,” although it does indicate what is required for a prospective spouse.

### **Position at Baptism Does God join every marriage in the world ?**

God said in the beginning :

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”  
(Genesis 2:24).

From this it has been argued that this Law has applied to all man-kind in every age, with the result that a remarried divorcee applying for baptism must be told he is living in adultery, and must leave his present wife. Nothing is said as to what should happen to any children. Oh! The confusion, inextricable confusion which results when the straight path is left. Aliens are without God in the world in what sense can we be expected to join their marriages?

Would God join the sons of God to the daughters of men in the days of Noah, and then destroy them by a flood for doing this?

Did God join the marriages of Israel to Moab at Baal-Peor, and then slay twenty four thousand by a plague because of these illicit unions?

What about the marriages Israel made with strange wives when they returned from captivity? Did God "join" these, and then cause His prophet to break the marriages? Listen to the divine record:

"Now therefore make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives.

Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do. Let now our rulers of all the congregation stand, and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter has turned away from us.

And they gave their hands that they would put away their strange wives; and being guilty, they offered a ram of the flock for their trespass." (Ezra 10: 11.12.14.19).

How impossible the suggestion that God "joined" these marriages and then visited His wrath upon those who were guilty!

Does God still join the marriages of believers to unbelievers, and then condemn them for this sin? God is not the author of such contradiction, such confusion.

Clearly, the divine record shows the impossibility of God joining all marriages.

Reference has been made in the booklet previously mentioned that because certain aliens were familiar with the Law of God that this is evidence that the Law is universal. Principles of the Truth have always infiltrated into the world, and although perverted, have given society a basis for existence. Wholesale neglect of what God purposed for the benefit of his creation from the very beginning has resulted in nations becoming depraved and corrupt, and in due time they have been destroyed from the earth like the Amorites whose "cup of iniquity was full." This judgment of God on nations is on an entirely different basis from God's judgment of those who are responsible to Him. The former are judged collectively without any reference to an individual appearance at the judgment seat; the latter are to be judged personally when Christ returns.

Looking at the marriages of man-kind in the world there are many which God would never have joined as will at once appear when the facts are considered.

In the time of Ptolemies it was the frequent custom for a brother to marry a sister. Would God at one and the same time condemn and yet join incestuous marriages? Obviously not.

In some countries today polyandry persists as it has done from time immemorial, wherein a woman marries two or three men at the same time. It would be interesting to know what those who claim that God joins all marriages would make of this.

Then, again, a marriage in the world has been spoken of as a contract which cannot be cancelled like obligations of indebtedness or service to his employer. So, it is argued, that a divorcee coming to the Truth must revert to his original contract, that is, to his first marriage. But what of the many marriages in the world, particularly amongst Aborigines and in India, where the parents arrange the marriage, and their children are not included in the contract?

The truth is that God does not join all marriages, but only those where there is a knowledge and belief of His Law.

The position of baptism is that God gives divine sanction to the existing marriage. Previous ones have been contracted without God and broken in ignorance of God's law, and so the parties are in no way accountable. The words of the Spirit given by the Apostle Paul are:

“Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.” (1 Corinthians 7:24).

### Conclusion

We have read of those whose words are like brandishing an axe, but this does not lead them anywhere. While in the forest of human difficulties created by the endless discussions of divorce, they may make a clearing by chopping down a few trees but only to find that there are still more trees than ever. That is what has befallen the apostasy. By the supposed removing of a difficulty without a basic understanding of the Truth, more and more difficulties have appeared.

As an example some say that one coming to the Truth “loosed from a wife” must return to her even if married to another. We will not speculate on the practical difficulties which could arise, difficulties of a very serious nature concerning the children of either one or both marriages. The Truth always is practical, and never places a believer in an unreasonable or impossible situation. So the advice of the Spirit in this case is:

“Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.  
But if thou marry, thou hast not sinned.”  
(1 Corinthians 7:27/28).

Here there is no injunction that the one previous married must break off his present union and return to the former one.

Also it is as well to remember that under the Law (Deuteronomy 24 verse 4), a husband who divorced his wife, was forbidden subsequently to take her again: which is absolutely contrary to the professed beliefs of some who say, that one coming to the Truth must return to his first spouse or remain as unmarried.

### SUMMARISING

**Marriage** is a divine institution intended to show the union of all God's people to His Son, at a time when naturally there will be neither marrying nor giving in marriage.

**The world is without God**, and neither understands the divine sanctity of marriage nor what it is intended to illustrate as a type.

**God only joins those marriages** wherein the parties are believers and sanctifies the marriages of those who come to the Truth even if one of the spouses is an unbeliever.

**Divorces or “putting away”**, is forbidden in all circumstances. There is no such thing as an “exceptive clause.”

**At baptism** God recognises the present marriage. Any previous broken marriage is one contracted in ignorance and without God.

It is hoped that those struggling with difficulties on the divorce question, which has so plagued the others who once had the Truth, will be helped by the foregoing to see the simplicity of the Truth, and will come to rejoice in the beautiful light which it sheds. The Truth was never intended to make us into lawyers; on the contrary we are to become and remain as “little children” if entrance into the Kingdom of God is to be gained. These solemn words of Jesus are pregnant with the issues of life and death. Do not let us try to be wise above what is written.

May the determination be to leave the murky atmosphere of speculation, profitless discussion, debate, strife and dissension, and rise to the sublime heights of the precious Truth, there to breathe its pure air with those who are joined together in the same mind and the same judgement.”

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

“AND THERE APPEARED ANOTHER WONDER IN HEAVEN; AND BEHOLD A GREAT RED DRAGON HAVING SEVEN HEADS AND TEN HORNS AND SEVEN CROWNS UPON HIS HEADS. AND HIS TAIL DREW THE THIRD PART OF THE STARS OF HEAVEN, AND DID CAST THEM TO THE EARTH—”

(Revelation 12 verses 3-4).

The red power of the political heaven at the present time is undoubtedly the U.S.S.R. Russia under Communism is stronger than it has ever been, and it jealously guards its sphere of influence to maintain its supremacy.

Three months ago, at the time of the eastern crisis, one of the Czech leaders assured 5,000 anxious students that Czechoslovakia had not “sold out to the Russians.” He was in an unenviable position for he was being pressed from all sides. By the Russians and by his own people, especially the intellectuals who had marched through Prague, the capital, chanting “Tell us the truth.” Later the Czech president spoke to the nation and declared. “We will not leave the way we have chosen.” The way referred to was a more liberal brand of communism which the nation greatly desired.

This however did not suit the U.S.S.R. at all. Soon Russia was ringing Czechoslovakia with troops and demanding talks about the situation. The Czech government behaved very courageously but to no avail, there was deadlock, the Russians would not be persuaded. Then the war of words took a sharp turn for the worst, for Pravda, the official newspaper of the Russian Communist Party issued a stern warning in its publication on “violent slanderous attacks against the fraternal parties.” Czech leaders were warned that it was up to them to “introduce elementary order” into the affairs of the Czechoslovakian press which had been freed of censorship. Reference was made to the six-nation East European summit at Bratislava on August 3rd, when Czechoslovakia pledged “irreconcilable struggle against bourgeois ideology and anti-socialist forces.”

Then suddenly it was a war of words no more. The Russian troops advanced across the border. Twenty-five thousand troops occupied the city of Prague, and as resistance by the population began to mount the Russian troops opened fire. They announced a ban on public assemblies and warned that street gatherings would be regarded as a provocation "and there will be shooting." Scores of Russian Secret Police arrived at Prague airport with orders to arrest the underground leaders and smash the Czech's will to resist.

A wave of arrests among writers and intellectuals then began. The Czech leaders had no option but to change their tactics, for outside their headquarters in Prague Castle stood the Russian army vehicles. The popular leaders however were not deposed, the Russian leaders were to astute for that. They were to be used as tools to sooth national dissatisfaction at the situation. Pressure would be eased. But soon it became obvious that relentlessly the Russians would pusue their intended course.

Later came the news that two men who had been branded in Czchoslovakia as traitors would be nominated to help run the country. The Czech leader had no choice but to accept such men who have been described as members of the pro-Russian "old guard", and who went to Moscow prepared to form a government of collab-orators.

In a speech the Czech leader stressed that his nation would have to remain faithful to the Warsaw Pact and would have to repudiate their previous political neutrality. The Czech President also said, at the same time that his colleague made this announcement, "Perhaps there are people here who are disappointed about the results. But our intitutions are functioning again, life is normalising itself, and a way is opening out of this complicated situation. The obligations which we assumed in Moscow demand unpopular measures which we must carry out — otherwise there would be great danger for us." But if the great danger for most had been averted, others were still threatened. One of the N.K.V.D. secret police chiefs, who supervised the wave of arrests in Budapest after the Hungarian uprising in 1956, arrived in Prague. Two thousand names of Czech liberals on a prepared arrest list was handed to him, but he was not satisfied. It is reported that he began to compile a list of his own.

But not only had Russia got a military stranglehold on its Czech neighbour it has an economic grip as well. Czechoslovakia after 20 years in the communist bloc has been made economically

vulnerable to Russia. In 1948 Czechoslovakia undoubtedly was a strong industrial country. The products of its armament and heavy industries were in great demand from other Communist Countries. Then came the years of that particular brand of communism which has since become disgraced even in Russia. A system of rigid centralised planning in which factories were given set targets to be attained irrespective of cost and quality caused a deterioration in the standard of output. Engineering goods which were a great support to the economy could no longer compete in world markets. This affected the Czech balance of payments. There were still substantial surpluses however, but only in the balance of payments with the rest of the communist bloc. This particular accumulation had a restricting effect on the economy for it was in inconvertible Russian roubles. On the other hand Czech trade with the western countries showed a persistent deficit. To deal with such an imbalance the Czechs asked Russia for a convertible currency loan, but this has not been forthcoming. Therefore even though the efficiency and competitiveness of Czech industry began to improve with the economic reforms of 1966-67 (which preceded the unsuccessful attempt to liberalise) it became obvious that Czechoslovakia would be economically chained to Russia for a long time, for this situation forces the Czechs to depend upon the Communist economic bloc for their main export markets, as well as for their food and most of their industrial fuel.

Here then is another star in the political firmament that has been cast down by the Red Dragon. Such a policy has had a dominant part in Russian schemes. When the Russians entered neighbouring countries in the last war, after Germany's decline, they acclaimed themselves as liberators when in actual fact they were set on a course of conquest to establish and extend their sphere of influence. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were taken over, and so to speak they were no longer on the map. Neither is the eastern section of Poland, and other countries that retained their identity are evidently satellites unable to escape from the domination of the great red power. This is the fulfillment of the prophecy as declared in the book of Revelation and heralds the time when Russia's turn will come. As she has cast down others so will she be cast down from her place of eminence.

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.” (Rev. 12 verses 7-8).

## **News from the Ecclesias**

**Eden, New York:** Grange Hall, Church Street.

Breaking of Bread 11-30 a.m. Sunday School 1-30 p.m.  
Bible Class: Midweek—Forestville, Hamburg, and Orcard  
Park. Alternate weeks: Revelation Study.

Response to the circulars mailed in August continue to come in. We are grateful for the opportunity to witness in these last days, and know that any whose hearts can be touched, will be moved to make contact..

... The Sunday School outing was held on September 14, at Chestnut Ridge Park. Beautiful weather was granted, adding to the enjoyment by all of His Creation.

There is still no decision concerning Bro. Steiger's draft status. It is a case of waiting upon the Lord for His Hand to be revealed.

We are grateful for the message of love and fellowship from the brethren and sisters assembled at the Manchester Gathering.

Heartfelt thoughts have been with those in trial and illness, with the prayer that relief may be granted, if it is our Father's will.

J.A.De.F.

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**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 : Bible Class, 7-15 p.m., Onward Hall,  
Deansgate.

We are looking forward to the Sunday School Party on October 26th., when the subject to be considered with a suitable demonstra-

tion is: "God—the Elohim"—the Powers." The Meeting is to be held in the Longsight Public Hall Manchester.

We were glad to have the welcome assistance of Bro. R. Wood, of Dudley on Sunday October 6th. His exhortation provoked very careful heart searching.

Encouragement has been found in the number of applications which have been received from Christadelphians for the review of the Correspondence with the Editor of the "Christadelphian," and it is evident there is much concern and deep interest in the issue raised which is no less than the issue of life & death. It is disappointing when some having delighted in the power and simplicity of the Truth as distinct from the counterfeit in the apostasy, should turn from the light of the Truth endeavouring to find consolation in the dark clouds of debate and doubt.

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**Newtonards, Co. Down, N. Ireland.**

Breaking of Bread, Sunday, 11-30 a.m. Sunday School,  
2-30 p.m. Bible Class, Wednesday.

We have felt very deeply in the past months how true is the scriptures, that in the One Body, whether one member be honoured all the members rejoice with it, or one member suffer, all the members suffer with it—that the members have the same care for one another, We have continued our correspondence in the local press with a short letter in reply to a statement by a religious body that there is **one** reason given in the scriptures for divorce. It is with great pleasure that we have shared the company of Sister Slaney for a few days.

J.P