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A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

"Take heed ye be not deceived"

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

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

“What is man . . .”

AS we go through certain experiences, we are better able to perceive the Hand of God working with us; sometimes to encourage, for we lack in faith; sometimes to remind, for we do forget; sometimes to chasten, for we fail; sometimes to bring us up short, for we do not always walk in His ways; sometimes to bless, showing us He is pleased. But for whatever reason, His Hand is extended, it is always to sustain—it is always held out in mercy, in justice, and in righteousness.

When, therefore, these experiences come, we should be moved to sit back and consider. This fills the mind with wonder that God should be concerned with us, for after all, He is God, the Almighty Father—the Creator of all that exists . . . and we are but His creatures! Yet He in His great kindness, does have us in mind. His eyes ever watch, as evidenced by our experiences.

In our meditation of this, we are helped by our Brother Paul in Hebrews, where he writes of the Lord Jesus, of God's provision of Him as a Mediator, a Redeemer, a covering for all who truly believe that He is the Son of God, that He was tempted as we are, yet overcame sin in obedience to His Father's will. He died in obedience to that will, declaring that God was right in requiring His death, and so could become the covering for all His brethren.

Thinking upon these wondrous things perhaps helps us to understand more fully Paul's words:

“ . . . What is man, that thou art mindful of him? . . . ”

(Hebrews 2-6)

Paul is going back to the mind of David expressed in Psalm 8:3-6, where he speaks first of all, of Jesus, but also of men like ourselves:

“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? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?”

We often look at the heavens, at night the stars shine forth in their glory, reflecting the glory of their Creator. They are so far away that man's mind cannot contemplate their distance; indeed measures it in such incomprehensible terms as light years. His creation is immense, immeasurable by man's mind. Man dares to reach out toward the moon, beyond his sphere; but even if

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allowed to do so, penetrating only a minute distance into the infinity of His creation. By comparison, man is so small, so finite, so insignificant, yet God in His kindness is mindful of him, indeed provides for him, where there is a striving to please the Creator.

“*Mindful*” we find implies *remembering, thinking upon, to make mention*. Why should God think upon man? It is because He is our Father. And, as a father thinks upon his children, watches over them, protecting, correcting, teaching, doing all the things a loving father does for his children ; so it is with God as The Father—the perfect Father, who never fails to provide and care for His children. How overwhelming the thought that God in His mercy thinks upon us—is mindful of us!

God was mindful of the Lord Jesus ; gave Him of His Spirit to sustain Him ; strengthened Him as He cried out for help to get the victory. As He agonised in that struggle to glorify God, He was heard ; God was mindful of Him. Paul in Hebrews writes to us of His victory, made possible because God was mindful, and answered when He cried out for help. Through the Lord Jesus, God is mindful of us, brethren and sisters. He hears when we cry out in trial. He hears when we strive to praise Him ; He hears when by our living we strive to glorify Him. He rejoices when we hallow His Name. He is jealous when we turn away from Him. How close the relationship, the fellowship! What a blessing it is to realise that God does take thought for His people, as they are struggling to obey His commands. What a help it is as well, as we feel His Hand working on our behalf.

“ He remembereth that we are dust.”

If God were not mindful of us, where would we be? If God forgot us, if He forsakes, how empty, how void of hope our life would be! How hopeless would be our struggle to overcome, for we fail so often, and could never get the victory without His mercy, seen as Paul tells us, in the mediatorship of Jesus, His Son.

David appreciated this, for he failed, and could go on only because of God’s forgiveness. In realising His graciousness, David wrote :

“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame : he remembereth that we are dust.”

How merciful of God to be mindful that we are dust ; we are weak ; we do fail. He is, however, mindful of this only toward those who fear Him ; those who because of love for God,

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fear to offend, trying to obey His Word. He does remember such, remembers we are but dust; dying creatures because of Adam's sin. Because He *is* mindful of this, He gave His only-begotten Son, that those who fear Him might have the hope of escape from death, due to every man.

This is Paul's message to his brethren, that we are reading in Hebrews; to us, as we realise that we are but dust. It is a great help and comfort to realise that God remembers this, and is ready to help, to sustain those who do fear Him.

“God remembered . . .”

There is much given in the Scriptures to help us, as we consider many of whom God has been mindful. For example, in Genesis 8:1, we read:

“And God remembered Noah . . . and the waters asswaged.”

Further, it is written concerning Noah:

“God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you . . . I do set my bow in the cloud . . . And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant . . .” (*Genesis 9:12-15*)

After the devastation of the flood, man, being dust, would fear when he saw clouds covering the earth again. Therefore, God being mindful of man, gave the token of His covenant, the rainbow. How beautiful is the rainbow, a fitting token of God's covenant. When we look upon it, *we* must be mindful of the covenant, of God's mercy in the provision of the Ark which can save us from perishing. The beautiful bow in the sky is a promise of the beauty which will fill the earth when Jesus returns, and the curse is removed. God has promised that all who fear Him, will know the *beauty of holiness*, made possible by His remembering His covenant with those who fear Him.

Why did He remember Noah, and grant this covering, this covenant?

Genesis 6:8-9 makes it very clear:

“ . . . Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord . . . Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.”

To such as Noah, God is mindful. How few there were in Noah's time who were remembered of God! It is the same today;

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He is mindful of so very few ; those who are ever in His sight, in His mind. It is a comfort, a help to us, brethren and sisters, in that if He is mindful of us, nothing can happen to us except as He directs it. In time of trial, of affliction, anguish, difficulty, this is our comfort, if we are aware.

There is further testimony to help us be aware :

“ And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God *remembered Abraham*, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow. . . .” (*Genesis 19:29*)

What did God remember that caused Him to deliver Lot? In *Genesis 18:23* we read :

“ . . . Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?”

Praying to God for Lot's sake, who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah, God heard and remembered Abraham's prayer, and delivered Lot from the overthrow. In *II Peter 2:6-9*, we read further concerning God's mindfulness :

“ And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow. . . . And delivered just (righteous) Lot. . . . The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations. . . .”

God was mindful of Abraham's prayer, and mindful as well of Lot's righteousness, saving him from the destruction of those wicked cities.

What a comfort this can be to us, brethren and sisters, that God does know how to deliver the righteous ; and not only knows how, but being mindful of them, does deliver! In this present evil world, we look for that deliverance, with hope and assurance, if we do indeed fear Him.

“ Remember me, O Lord . . . ”

Our brother, David, was mindful of God's deliverance, and reveals his heart :

“ Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people : O visit me with thy salvation.”

(*Psalms 106:4*)

Let this be our constant prayer in trial and difficulty—
“ Remember me, O Lord, with (thy) favour.” “ *Favour* ” we find means *delight, pleasure, to be acceptable*. God does indeed remember those who delight in Him, and consequently bring

delight, pleasure to Him by their love, their faith, their works. Toward such, His pleasure is to be mindful of them, to sustain and to help.

“We ought to give the more earnest heed . . .”

With these thoughts in mind, we can understand more fully Paul's message to his brethren:

“ . . . What is man, that thou art mindful of him? . . . ”

We can receive more surely, too, with this perception, Paul's exhortation to us:

“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.” (*Hebrews 2:1*)

We have heard the voice of the Spirit through Paul, through David, and others—reminding us that God is mindful, even if we are men. It is a great wonder that God should be so—a great blessing as well, for without His remembering, we would have no hope of salvation! Paul warns us, then:

“If the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation . . . ?” (*verses 2-3*)

Brethren and sisters, we are granted the hope of salvation through Jesus, because God *is* mindful of us. Let us be sure that we are ever mindful of this—of Him; and therefore “give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard.”

J.A.DeF.

Christendom — and others — Astray

The Spirit of the Law the Spirit of Christ.

“He will be with thee, He will not fail thee: neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.” Deuteronomy 31:8.

THE Truth is not a “letter”, a catechism or a series of “Articles of Faith”. It is a living power energising, sustaining, guiding, and comforting those who are called to *the* Truth by God. This great and inestimable fact is because of God's presence in the midst of His people.

It is customary to take certain truths for granted without realising their stupendous import. Maybe, to refer them to God's

dealings with His people in the past, without any sincere and lively recognition of their present application: or to give them such a casual meaning as to dissolve their power in the copious waters of Gentile wisdom.

The presence of God for those in *the Truth* is as essential as His power or Spirit, by which all flesh is sustained. Whether men recognise it or not, all are dependent upon God for the present life. This is vividly seen that:

“If he gathers unto himself his spirit and his breath;

“All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.” (*Job 34:14-15*)

Every day in every land the solemnity of this universal truth is seen; the continuing procession of the dead burying their dead.

Whatever the claims of a sect, if God is not with them they are dead. For of our own selves we are nothing, and so are entirely dependent upon God, not only for the provision of things necessary in this life, but equally for our preservation in God's wisdom and understanding, that there may be a sure hope of a life to come.

The divine record of God's dealing with His people in the past, affords a true insight into the blessings accompanying God's presence. This is seen to a remarkable degree by the indestructibility of God's people, the Jews. Let us go to the time when God dwelt amongst them.

The necessity of God's presence to the Ecclesia in the wilderness.

When Israel came out of Egypt and dwelt in the wilderness, they were the one and only Ecclesia of God. Stephen in his witness to *the Truth* that brought about his savage death says:

“This is that Moses, . . .

“This is he, that was in the *Ecclesia* in the wilderness.”
(*Acts 7:37-38*)

God's presence was essential to their survival in the precarious circumstances in the desert; of instructing them in all the Truth, and finally in bringing them to the promised inheritance.

These facts should speak volumes concerning the true Ecclesia today, helping to identify *the Ecclesia*, and giving assurance of hope if permitted to be joined to *the Ecclesia*. Help, indispensable help may be received in considering the gracious provision of those things written aforetime concerning the true Ecclesia, and

which are mercifully preserved for our learning "upon whom the end of the ages are come".

None of us will have failed to see a Jew, and be impressed with his preservation, notwithstanding the persecution which he has suffered, and the dispersion in all lands which he has had to endure. Every Jew is a living witness to the abiding power of God, and going back to the time when they were brought out of Egypt, apart from God's presence they would have perished in the "great and terrible wilderness". God's presence was shown in a most dramatic manner. First at Sinai, when the assembled Ecclesia witnessed what has never since been experienced. They were made aware of God's power in the "thunderings and lightnings", and in the hearing of His voice which reverberated throughout the congregation. So awe-inspiring was the sight, that even Moses did "exceedingly fear and quake".

Every member of the Ecclesia was filled with godly fear, and humbled; not to terrify them but to sustain them in the simple belief that the great God of heaven was actually with them.

Their leader, chosen of God, was Moses who, although he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, never once made the slightest reference to this in his teaching. Indeed, although his wife was an alien, he always heartily condemned the wisdom of Egypt along with their sinful pleasures. He might have been tempted to display his superior learning in discussing the Truth, but never did he allow himself to do this. There was nothing in his speech or manner which might have made his brethren afraid.

There is much more in the tribute to Moses than is generally realised, that he was the "meekest" man in the earth. Although the greatest leader of God's people until the time of Christ, he never became as a "lord over God's heritage", but was an "ensample to the flock". How much this tells us of God's character, for Moses was as God to Israel; how much it tells us of the blessing of God's presence in the midst of His people; all-powerful yet gentle, great yet long-suffering, above all yet condescending to the meek and lowly, hating evil but never failing to show true love and mercy to those whose hearts are towards Him. "Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord".

The necessity of God's presence in the Ecclesia now.

How difficult it is for the human mind to receive some of the simplest truths in their profound and full meaning. God, who

was manifestly with the Ecclesia in the past, has promised He will be with His Ecclesia now:

“I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” (2 *Corinthians* 6:16)

Is this gracious promise of less import than it was to Israel? Certainly it cannot be, except in those Bodies which have the “name that they live but are dead”. Just as God was with Israel, providing, protecting, and instructing in all *the* Truth, so His promise means that this will be the happy and blessed lot of the true Ecclesia now.

In the Ecclesia in the wilderness, brethren did not go to colleges to be higher educated, yet their instruction was complete. They had no libraries to which they might refer for their understanding, but they had a better and more complete provision in being able to go to God for the explanation of all difficulties, for the understanding of all *the* Truth.

Again, Moses who was as God to Israel says in this connection:

“Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God’s: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it.” (*Deuteronomy* 1:17)

Will the provision for the understanding of all *the* Truth be any less in the true Ecclesia? Must brethren be left to argue, assisted by the writings of the learned “divines”? Some quoting one authority and another countering by an appeal to some other writer? Is such a practice not evidence that the uncertainty and confusion amongst the great ones in Christendom has seeped into the counsels of those who once had the Truth?

Let the simple fact be appreciated that the greater the authorities in Christendom, then more hopeless is the confusion amongst them. They do not speak the same things, but ever flounder in their disputatious arguments, contradicting one another, leaving their flocks without any sound ideas on anything. Judged out of their own mouths their light is as darkness; and as intense as that which befell Egypt.

In some of their wordy performances, these learned acrobats somersault so unexpectedly that they land in a most undignified position. Such an example is seen in the report of the Commission which sat for fifteen years to produce a report on the “Doctrine

of the Church of England". It is almost amusing that these begowned and lettered men could allow themselves to say in connection with the resurrection of Christ (denied by some of the Commission) that:

"His rising, however explained (and it involves probably an element beyond our explaining), is to be understood to have been an event as real and concrete as the crucifixion itself (which it reversed) and an act of God, wholly unique in human history. The symbol of this fact in the Gospels is the story of the empty tomb. More than one explanation of this has been suggested; but the majority of the Commission are agreed in holding the traditional explanation—viz., that the tomb was empty because the Lord had risen."

What wonderful wisdom! A child of five could have done as well, and it would not have taken him fifteen minutes to give this answer, never mind fifteen years!

The Loss of God's presence by the 'others'.

Departure from the Truth involves departure from God. Instead of dependence upon Him for revealing all His Truth, the clever, the educated come to rely on their powers. In doing so they are but copying the grievous folly of Christendom.

This lamentable fact is clearly seen in that their higher educated leaders drink deeply of the foul waters of Christendom. The authority of the lettered Prelates of the Church is often quoted and respected. With what result? That the confusion and contradiction of Christendom becomes the pattern of their thinking, writing, and discussing; leading them nowhere but into the blackness of Christendom's darkness.

The appalling result is that amongst the many other denials of God's Word there now prevails unbelief in the Creation account. It is also argued that Adam was not the first man, and that the serpent was not literal. These heresies clearly show the company that has been kept and sought; how the God of all truth has been left.

Is it any wonder that where human wisdom is taking the place of the divine, the understanding of the Scripture is entirely lacking? Many examples might be quoted.

One accredited as being in charge of—"First steps and Problems"—falls into the darkness of the learned abyss when he

dares to say that the "Law of Moses is the Mammon of unrighteousness"!

Another referred to as the "Watchman" speaks of those doctrines which were protected by faithful brethren in the Divisions of the past as "obscure". When asked what these were, he declined to answer. Surely not a "watchman", intent like those of old in upholding the Truth.

The main Editor says he would not baptise one who said that the responsible unbaptised would not be raised; yet on the other hand opens wide his arms to the group which says this should not be a matter of fellowship, and asks that the "Lord might have mercy on them". This might pass as "Christian love", but certainly not as the upholding of the Truth. Why he should reject one, and plead for mercy for the others shows where reasoning without God leads.

God's presence real in the One Body.

The benefits accruing to the Ecclesia by the presence of God are immeasurable. No longer is interpretation of Scripture, and decisions on practice a matter of debate, or confined to those who set themselves up as overlords. The humblest may rejoice in the provision of food from heaven, as much as in the blessing of daily bread. For them the words of Jesus have a simple and powerful meaning:

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

"For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

"Or what man is there of you whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

"Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

"If ye then, being evil, knoweth how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

(Matthew 7:7-11)

They willingly confess that by comparison with the "learned" they are but "babes", but rejoice in the promise of Christ:

"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

"Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

(Matthew 11:25-26)

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To appreciate fully the blessing of this promise, it must be experienced. Deliverance from endless debate on "Statements of Faith", and "Open Questions" ceases. They recede as the dark clouds before the clear shining of the sun. Light giving enlightenment to the "simple" is enjoyed, unimpaired by the smoky fumes of "philosophy and vain deceit". Truly, these are "babes", but have the comforting assurance that God is with them to provide as a good Father all His Truth, if they are faithful and ask for His help, so that they can delight in strength which is not of themselves, but is of God who dwelleth among them, and be able to say:

"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, thou hast perfected praise." (*Matthew 21:16*)

Let us then be heedful to keep the simple understanding of the incalculable blessing of having God with us, and never aspire to be dependent upon man however great he may seem.

W.V.B.

The Gospel

The Temptation of Christ

AFTER the experience of meeting John the Baptist and being immersed in the River Jordan, Jesus having at that time the assurance that God His Father was with Him by sign and with power, Jesus went away into the wilderness. A great work lay in front of Him, but first of all He needed a period of quiet meditation. Forty days He was in the solitude of the wilderness, and just as Israel of old had been tested forty years in the wilderness after their coming out of Egypt, so was Jesus tested.

Israel of old had experienced a craving for food, especially the good things of Egypt which they had left behind, and in their weakness had regarded natural sustenance as being more important than the blessing of freedom and truth. The divine record reveals that Jesus was like any other man in such a tendency. "He was tempted in all points like unto His brethren" so His craving for food caused a tempting thought to rise up in His mind suggesting that He use the power of His Father, which had been so freely given to Him, to make provision for His human desire. Turn these stones into bread said the temptation in His mind. The record says it was the devil which suggested this to Him, which of course it was, for the devil is the diabolos, that desire in human nature that is ever contemplating how it can achieve vain satisfaction for the flesh irrespective of the

divine demarkation line. God has granted a boundary or line (bolos) which is to protect His children from crossing (dia) into the quagmire of evil and hurtful things. On the right side of that line are many good gifts and also the building up of character to fit individuals for the greatest gift of all, eternal life. But the diabolos is strong in its desire to have what God in His wisdom has forbidden. Human nature, the flesh, wants to satisfy itself even to its own hurt, for like the serpent in the beginning it is ever suggesting to itself that God does not mean what He has said ; and to go across the line (diabolos) will be rewarding and satisfying.

Jesus kept on the right side of the line ; He used “ precept upon precept, line upon line ”. The Spirit power in His mind came to His aid in bringing to His remembrance what God in His Fatherly loving kindness had caused to be written for the benefit of His children. “ It is written, man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God ” (Matthew 4 v 4). Jesus could have dismissed such divine counsel from His mind if He had given way to His own desire but He was completely faithful to the Word of His God.

But still the striving against the way of God continued in His mind. “ Then the diabolos taketh Him up into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto Him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down : for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee : and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.” (Matthew 4 vs 5-6)

At once it can be perceived that a conflict was taking place in the mind of Christ. He was in the wilderness and therefore could not be literally looking down from a lofty place of that edifice which Herod had commanded to be built for the Jews. How subtle are the reasonings of the human mind. The scripture was referred to as Jesus meditated upon His future work. There was the promise in the Psalms upon which He could rely, and what a fillip for the respect desired it would be when such a miracle was witnessed by the crowds gathered at the temple. But such action would gratify pride, and so elevate fleshly prestige. Jesus countered the thought as He weighed it over with the aid of the divine balance that God has given in all His word. “ It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God ” (verse 7).

But still fleshly reasoning persisted. “ Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them ; and saith unto Him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship

me." Jesus knew it was against the purpose of God to seek for material power, yet it was a very tempting thought as in the mind's eye He contemplated all the material advantages that could be His if He turned away from the course that God had purposed for Him. Men with far less personality and powers of perception have become great emperors. But to give way to such a thought would be to abjectly fall into the position of giving self wholly to the worshipping of the diabolos. The life would be bent upon obtaining power and possessions to the exclusion of everything else. When such power had been achieved, then all the effort would go into maintaining supremacy against all threats. In such a course would be every evil work, murder, cruelty, despotism and deceit. There was the choice ; a noble work which would glorify God and in which work there would be much personal suffering ; or giving self over completely to the ways of the diabolos which know no bounds. Jesus overcame this temptation when He contemplated the wisdom in the instruction of His Father who had caused it to be written that "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve" (verse 10). God is perfect in all His ways, and He is the source of all life. Only in worshipping Him can men find that which is good. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life were overcome by Christ in this struggle in the wilderness. It is recorded that after this the devil "departed from Him for a season" (Luke 4 v 13). For a time the temptations in His flesh were subdued, but they would rise again in His mind from time to time, until through death He (would) destroy him that had the power of death (eternal through disobedience) that is, the devil." (Hebrews 2 v 14).

D.L.

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

“ And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke.” (Acts 2 v. 19)

THE Apostle Peter was quoting from the book of the prophet Joel when he included the above words in his address on the day of Pentecost. The prophecy was beginning to come to pass because a new era had opened with the resurrection of Christ from the dead as “the first fruits” of those who sleep. Now the exhortation was “whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

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This era of witness, begun by the Apostles prior to the return of Christ in power to “execute the judgment written” is now drawing to a close.

The pouring out of the Spirit upon the Apostles as a sign is known universally if not believed, because the Creator’s message contained in the Bible has spread to the four corners of the earth. Now at the end of this age “wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath” are beginning to multiply. They herald “that great and notable day of the Lord”, and also the time of darkening for the bright lights of the political firmament of mankind.

Of signs in the earth beneath there have been many. Bloodshed has been great and still is. “Fire” has become a term for shooting down the enemy, and of vapour of smoke there has been plenty in the battles of the last half century. It is significant in this context to mark the words of Joel:

“And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, AND PILLARS OF SMOKE.” (*Joel 2 v 30*)

What a sight it must be to see that huge pillar of smoke ascending from the Hydrogen Bomb explosion, casting its fearful shadow over mankind. This has been a great wonder, a great sign, in the earth beneath, as this age draws to its close.

Now what of the heaven above? Men have reached a stage where they have begun to emulate in their actions what has been previously only in the province of The Eternal to tread. They have gone into heaven, and they have returned from heaven again. They have looked down on the earth and moon as no man has ever done before. This is a great sign of the end, something that would not have been thought possible two decades ago, but rather was regarded as belonging only to the realm of scientific fiction.

But now God has allowed men to journey out to the moon and back. He could have prevented this, but did not, for, as foretold by the prophet, this is for a sign. Up to the time of writing there have been twenty-eight Space Flights in which forty-five men (Russians and Americans) have taken part.

Some of the comments from the three men on the Apollo 8 spaceship, when they were undergoing their journey, are worth noting, reminding us that the earth is indeed a jewel of the heavens. As the men looked down they described the earth as a “beautiful, beautiful view” having a predominantly blue background and a large covering of cloud. The generally light brown of the land mass could be seen and the areas of water a royal

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blue. What a change of aspect when the men came into the lunar orbit. There was no colour there. The message was that "the moon is essentially grey, no colour. Looks like plaster of paris, sort of greyish beach sand. The sea of fertility doesn't stand out as well here as it does back on earth. The craters are all rounded off. There's quite a few of them. Some are newer, many of them—especially the round ones—look like they've been hit by meteorites or projectiles of some sort. The walls of the craters are terraced, terraces all the way down." The leader of the expedition frankly described the moon as "a vast, forbidding type of expanse of nothing. Not a very exciting place to live or work". This experience prompted one of the men in the space capsule to send his message back to those who were on "THE GOOD EARTH". His expression was obviously one of hearty appreciation of the good things left behind. As the men began to read out in a simple manner the first ten verses of Genesis chapter 1, it became clear to those listening on earth that the thoughts of the men were, if only momentary, on the Creator and His Creation, and on the indisputable truth that everything He had made for man was "very good".

Was this a form of God witnessing to the earth through these men? Were they speaking as "from the mouth of God"? Before rejecting such a thought remember God's declaration through His prophet "I will show wonders in heaven above". From one end of the earth to the other the voice of these men was heard, witnessing to the goodness of the Creator's provision for man, but on how many did this register a lasting impression? How many have been made to realise that man should be content with what he has been given and should be very thankful for it, and put it to better use?

But man has not been humbled by what he has been allowed to see in the heaven above, his proud ambition is to seek still further beyond the sky above. Yet it has been shown that there is nothing there for man.

Cost will not deter. The great powers in their rivalry are prepared to pay a high price for national prestige in the space race. The preparations for sending men to the moon has cost the U.S.A. at least £10,000 million. The Russians also have been spending on a similar scale. Meanwhile much in the earth is being neglected. There are desperate problems of poverty and hunger and the consequent diseases which result, which tends to stir up troubles. This state of affairs mocks at the prayer of the leader of the spacemen, who prayed for peace in the world below.

This will only come when Christ returns from the heavens, not in a puny capsule, but in power and great glory. Meanwhile there is this sign to remind that the time of His second coming is near.

D.L.

Correspondence

Letter from D.C., Horley, Surrey.

“Received your third impression of *Remnant* article on MARRIAGE. . . .

“From what is written on page 215 of November *Remnant* where we read ‘At baptism God recognises the present marriage’ it would appear that God was mistaken and Jesus Christ, and Dr. Thomas in attributing ADULTERY to the unbaptised.

“Gal 5:19 ‘The works of the flesh are ADULTERY, etc.’, *Elpis Israel*, page 2.

“Mark 7:21 ‘for from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts ADULTERIES, etc.’.

“These and other scriptures prove beyond doubt that God recognises marriages of unbelievers, otherwise there could be no adultery of marriage, if they were not recognised by God.

“Did not the Apostle write to the Corinthians saying ‘And such were some of you’, ADULTERERS, etc. 1 Cor. 6:9-11?

“Perhaps you would be able to answer this question—How could the Corinthians have been ADULTERERS before baptism, if God only joins those marriages wherein the parties are believers?”

Reply:

You fail to differentiate between those in the world who are not accountable to the Judgment; and those who are enlightened and so are to be judged.

The effect of this great difference is made clear by the Apostle Paul:

“For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law.” (*Romans 2:12*)

So that those in the world who are “without law”, are not subject to God’s Law in a personal sense. Hence, their marriages were *outside* God’s Law, and on account of their transgressions they “perish without law”. (*Romans 2:12*.)

This inspired statement confirms the instances given in the Article showing wherein it would have been impossible for God to have joined the marriages:

“God would never have joined the marriages of the sons of God to the daughters of men in the days of Noah, and then destroy them by a flood for doing this.

“God could never have joined the marriages of Israel at Baal-Peor, and then destroy twenty-four thousand by a plague because of these illicit unions.

“If God had joined the marriages of those in Israel to strange wives, He would never have required Ezra to break them when they entered the land.

“If you still believe that it is an article of your faith that it is wrong to marry an alien, however could you withdraw from someone who transgresses in this respect, saying at the same time that what was done was of God?”

Why do you overlook such irrefutable evidence, which so far, has never been answered by anyone having your views?

Further quote from Mr. C.’s letter:

“Your quotation of 1 Cor 7:27-28 in support of your belief that a second marriage is allowed to continue while a former marriage partner is still living, is very unworthy, for the passage quoted is advice by the Apostle to ‘Virgins’ in Christ (see verse 25 for context).”

Reply:

The verse in question reads:

“Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be *loosed*. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife.”

(1 *Corinthians 7:27*)

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Why wrest the meaning of simple words—"loosed from a wife", which means just what it says. It should not be necessary to add that one who is "loosed" was previously bound, as is clearly borne out by the original word—"l^usis", concerning which the Lexicon reads—"a loosing", "N.T. a release from the marriage bond. 1 Corinthians 7:27"

If, as you suggest, the Spirit's use of the word *wife* was meant for *virgin*, why did not the Spirit use the correct word; especially as in the very same chapter both words are used in the same verse:

"There is a difference also between a wife and a virgin."
(verse 34)

If the Spirit is careful to recognise this difference, then the Spirit would not be so careless or ambiguous as you suggest to use the word *wife* when *virgin* was meant.

If you would read the Article again with an unprejudiced mind, you will find that there is much you have overlooked, which is preventing your seeing the simple Truth, and leads you with others to an appalling confusion, which, is seen even in the pamphlet you have sent on "Divorce"; for on page 30 the Article states:

"When divorce and remarriage has already taken place, the commandments of Christ require the error to be acknowledged and forsaken. This means that the partners of the second marriage must separate, and that then they must henceforth live alone, nor must they go back to the original partners."

Now this statement has been endorsed by you in the margin:

"This has been revised in later editions, not now applicable."

The Truth does not require to be revised. Like God, it changeth not.

Will it be expecting too much to see you make a complete change and accept the whole Truth without which salvation is impossible?

W.V.B.

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: Midweek: Forestville, Hamburg, Buffalo, and Orchard Park. Alternate weeks: Revelation Study.

The Hand of the Almighty has been again evidenced in the appeal of Bro. Steiger for conscientious objector status. The military advisor to the Draft Board most unexpectedly has agreed to review his file.

Thoughts and supplications are with the brethren in the work in Nottingham, with the knowledge that it is in God's Hands.

The Sunday School Party is planned, God willing, for Saturday, 15th February.

J.A.DeF.

Dudley. 233, Stourbridge Road, Holly Lane.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread, 11-30 a.m.
Wednesdays: Bible Class, 7-15 p.m.

It has been a joyful experience for those of us here to be privileged by the grace of God to join in giving help and guidance to eight in Nottingham who have been cast out of the assembly of the "Ecclesia of Christ", by the tyranny and oppression of Nicolaitanism which prevails there for daring to speak against wrong doctrine and practices.

Whilst this brings back painful memories of our own, we can rejoice all the more for the deliverance. The promise of God is thus shown to be true; "I will deliver my flock from their mouth". At the time of writing, those in Nottingham are asking for further help, giving us encouragement to continue. Their minds appear towards, and we look with eager anticipation to what the Spirit is leading.

The knowledge of the prayers and fellowship of the brethren and sisters in these labours, fortify and sustain us in this work of the Lord Jesus.

R.W.

THE REMNANT

Newtownards, Co. Down, N. Ireland.

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

With great joy we heard of the unexpected development in Bro. Steiger's case against the Military Draft Board in the States, and await further news in hope and in answer to our supplications.

Although we live in a place professing strong religious beliefs, the prevailing darkness seems to be deepening through fear as the "distress of nations" and local and National bankruptcy becomes evident to all. So the sects of Christendom try to draw nearer together here. The Psalmist said "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help". How few are prepared to put their trust in God alone; but rather, through fear, cleave to the wrong which draws them to the abyss.

We hope to arrange a Lecture in Newtownards Town Hall in February, and are grateful to be called to keep the Light of the Truth here.

J.P.

**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.

Some letters have been received expressing appreciation of the Article in the November issue on "Marriage—and with a reference to the present contention on Divorce". Copies may be had of this Article on request. It is hoped that those who have expressed warm interest may be drawn to where the consideration is intended to lead them—to the One Body wherein God alone dwells.

W.V.B.