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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

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At the Table of the Lord

“... THE LORD RAISED UP A DELIVERER ...”

THROUGH the record in Judges we are helped to a greater perception of God’s mercy and love towards His children. The judges of whom we read were men whom God raised up, and through Him they:

“... delivered them (Israel) out of the hand of those that spoiled them.”
Judges 2:16.

Prior to the rule of the judges, Joshua led Israel into the land promised to their fathers and directed that it be divided by lot. By God’s power they were helped to conquer the land, driving out or destroying most of the inhabitants. As Joshua was near to death he reviewed God’s provision for His people:

“... I have given you a land for which ye did not labour ... Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and truth: ... choose you this day whom ye will serve; ... but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”
Joshua 24:13—15.

In response to Joshua’s words Israel vowed:

“... The LORD our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey.”
Verse 24.

Here was a determination to submit and to honor God. Yet within a few years Israel turned away to worship false gods. As a result:

“... The anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant ... I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations ... that through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the LORD ... or not.”
Judges 2:20—22.

Israel did not keep that way, but rather embraced the inhabitants of the land and:

“... took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods.”
Judges 3:6.

As a result, we are shown (verse 8) how God in anger sold them into Mesopotamia whose king they served for eight years. Israel

failed in their proving, and so adversity came upon them. It may seem unfair that God will place His people in a position which is to test their obedience and trust, but He is all-wise, knows what we are like, and knows exactly what we *can* do. Will we submit and serve Him, or will we, as did Israel, succumb to our own wants — to that which *we* may think is good, satisfying, or needful? Israel failed to obey their God, not just once, but many times during the 300 or more years under their judges.

How must God have felt as He watched them turn their backs so soon after He had delivered them from the oppression of Egypt and granted them their inheritance? He would be grieved and angry, yet in all the record of the judges we are shown the constancy of His mercy and compassion:

“Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.”

Judges 2:16.

Did He grant this deliverance as a matter of course? The answer is revealed for us in Judges 3:9 —

“And when the children of Israel *cried unto the LORD*, the LORD raised up a deliverer ...”

This crying to the Lord was necessary before He helped, as Joshua had reminded them, when before his death he reviewed God’s word:

“I brought your fathers out of Egypt: ... when they cried unto the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, ... and your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt ...”

Joshua 24:6,7.

Now as they dwelt in the land, under oppression because of turning from Him, He did not desert them, but heard their cries and again “raised up a deliverer”. To *cry* means to shriek in anguish or in danger; it is an urgent sound of great distress, a call for help. Israel in severe affliction called out, and in their pain they were heard by God and He provided a deliverer. In the Hebrew, *deliverer* is “yasha”, meaning to save, to rescue, to help, to bring salvation. In the record of Judges, Israel cried out and was delivered many times. However, after each deliverance was granted and oppression was relieved, their need was less

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urgent. Thankless Israel forgot, and as a result they soon slipped back into their own ways. On the sixth recorded occasion that Israel cried unto Him, God answered them:

“... Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, ... Ammon, ... Philistines, ... Zidonians, ... Amalekites ... Maonites (Midian) ... ye cried to me, and I delivered you ... Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more. Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you ...”
Judges 10:11:14.

Is the Almighty honored when there is a seeking of Him only when there is great distress? Must there not be a seeking in good times as well as evil — an acknowledging of His rule over us, and of our need for His guidance and blessing? How wisely and justly God spoke as he said, “Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen;” — reminding that there is only One sure source of help and mercy, and that it is especially for those who with importunity cry unto Him in all their doings. Israel, stricken by God’s words and realising their need for Him said:

“... We have sinned; do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only ... And they put away the strange gods ... and served the LORD ...”
Judges 10:15—16.

As a result of this change of attitude God heard their cry, for:

“... his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.”

Verse 16.

We who are parents know how great is the grief when our children are in misery, even if it is brought on by their own failures. We want to help and in kindness do so (sometimes unwisely). Must not our merciful Father feel this way? In His infinite and perfect wisdom He does deliver at a time and in a manner which He knows is best. Let us then, Brethren and Sisters, recognise that He will hear and deliver as we in anguish appeal unto Him.

There is help and assurance also in the mind of David who, when distressed, relied upon God, was urgent in his appeals. This is revealed in Psalm 12, entitled: “To the one who overcomes with the help of God’s abundance, a Psalm of David.” He realised

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that the necessary overcoming of weakness and failure is possible only with recognition of a need, and then only through God's abundant mercy:

"Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men." Verse 1.

We are all sons of men naturally, although called to be sons of God. This creates the struggle in which we are engaged: Can we live in service to Him as sons, conquering the impulses of the flesh known to all the sons of men? Can we then partake of David's spirit as he cried out in that struggle for victory: "Help (yasha), LORD;" deliver me, LORD. To this spirit God responded:

"For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety (yasha) from him that puffeth at him." Verse 5.

To *puff* is to scoff, or as the margin reads, to bring into a snare. Who is it that "puffeth" at us the most, Brethren and Sisters? Is it not ourselves, our wants, our natural thinking which can so easily ensnare us? Often this comes upon us unbeknownst, for the flesh is subtle in its reasoning. Can we then with David's conviction cry out, "Yasha, LORD" in our struggle to escape its snare as he did?

"Thou shall keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." Psalm 12:7.

If only we could nourish and build in ourselves this trust, this simple reliance on God which David knew as he struggled to be the victor!

In this present evil world there is much that can beguile us away from the serving of our Father in single-mindedness. Sometimes it is wished that we could be more removed from its evil influence, but we are so placed as a means of proving what is first in our hearts and lives. Jesus's words as He prayed for His brethren are a helpful reminder:

"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world,...I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." John 17:14,15.

And God will do this if the need and weakness in recognised in ourselves, and if our minds can hang on to these assuring words about our brother in Israel:

"... The LORD preserved (yasha-ed) David whithersoever he went." II Samuel 8:6.
J.A.DeF.

An Acceptable Time

In the 49th chapter of Isaiah we see the hope that God held out to Israel extended to the Gentiles — a gracious promise through the Lord Jesus. The 22nd verse tells us:

“Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.”

This hope spoken of by Isaiah is the hope we have today — the hope seen in the provision of the Lord Jesus to any who can permit their living to be touched and influenced by the Word of God. As He was foreordained to be the essence of the gospel message, the Lord Jesus and His work were foretold by Isaiah in verses 8—9:

“Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;
That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Shew yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places.”

These words speak of Christ — the means whereby we can take confidence in the hope God extends. We know how the Lord Jesus used His living and knowledge of God’s mercy to approach unto the Father to seek help and deliverance from His own flesh nature. How great an example this is for us that we might approach to be heard and helped, to keep alive the covenant relationship we can know through His covering.

The words, “acceptable time”, as used by Isaiah, translate into the thought of being diligent and come from a prime root meaning to be pleased with or to satisfy a debt. To satisfy a debt, brings to mind the redemption price paid by the Lord Jesus’s death, a perfect life poured out in obedience to His Father. Even at the time of Adam, an acceptable time to return to God could be found through the covering of animal skins — the shedding of blood which spoke of Christ. In Isaiah 55 it speaks of this acceptable time in verses 6—7:

“Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

Let the wicked foresake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”

To seek the Lord while He may be found is to do so in an acceptable time — time used to call upon God while He is near. Our desire today should be to find God, and to do so we must seek Him. Is this using the time acceptably, telling Him that we need His help? We can reveal what is truly within our hearts by striving to be God’s children, valuing the hope mercifully extended to us Gentiles.

David was one who valued the time given to him when he said in Psalm 69:13—14:

“But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters.”

David recognised his only source of help and means of deliverance was God. His reaction in time of trial or testing was to come to God in prayer. This was an acceptable time, for David recognised he needed the kind of help that was beyond his own strength. The Lord Jesus in His hour of testing in the garden, approached unto God not once but on three occasions seeking help ... an acceptable time, during which time His spirit was strengthened to help Him overcome. This speaks to us of using the time God has given us in an acceptable manner, seeking the deliverance only He can provide. David knew he could be taken from the mire of affliction and would not be allowed to sink. God does hear, see and help those He regards as His little ones. David often approached to God, for he failed often. But because of God’s mercy and grace His hand was there to uphold him. Psalm 32:5 echoes his thoughts:

“I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the

LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.” Was this an acceptable time for David? He knew he could not hide the sins of his flesh, but if he did confess them, he knew that God would forgive, that he might be once again found acceptable.

How needful it is then for one striving to be godly, to pray unto the Father in times of trial and testing. God looks upon us and is mindful of our every thought and circumstance. He also looks to see if we turn to Him when in difficulty.

The purpose of God is seen in this 49th chapter of Isaiah, desiring that all come to know His Son as a Saviour and Redeemer. How merciful that the Almighty extends the knowledge of His purpose to us as Gentiles and that we should be privileged to know that heritage extended to Israel of old. In gratitude we must use the time given in an acceptable manner if we hope to share in that promise of life everlasting. Paul confirms these thoughts in speaking to the Roman brethren in chapter 12:1—3:

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.”

We can accomplish this only as we yield our bodies, seeking God to renew our minds and prove those things within us that are right in His sight. This is how the Lord Jesus showed an example of overcoming as He sought to do God’s will, no matter what price the flesh had to pay.

These words of Isaiah then are a help to us to recognise how delightful it is to God as we approach unto Him. We remember the meaning of acceptable as, “to satisfy a debt”. How indebted we should feel because of the great price paid by the Lord Jesus Christ in the sacrifice of His life, to make possible our hope of acceptance now and in the time to come.

M.C.S.

A Bible Class

“MY TRANSGRESSION IS SEALED IN A BAG”

When thinking of Job we marvel that he was able to withstand the grievous trials which came upon him. Not the least of these were the accusations of those who professed to be his “friends” even while they pulled him down. The verse we are considering is part Job’s reply to their accusations, and it reveals his perception of the Father’s mercy and justice, and also his own determination to retain his integrity and so honor God. Job’s mind in the midst of this great distress was:

“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: ...”

Job 13:15.

This complete trust in God enabled Job to seek His deliverance, His mercy in the midst of his affliction. A factor in Job’s trust was the acknowledgement that:

“Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble ... Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.”

Job 14:1,5.

This recognition confirmed his resolve to use that appointed time in honoring his God.

Paul also helps in this perception:

“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, *Redeeming the time*, because the days are evil.

Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.”

Ephesians 5:15—17.

Job, one who did understand the will of the Lord, did strive to walk circumspectly, submitting to God’s hand upon him, and he was helped in his struggle by the realisation that:

“... thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?”

Job 14:16.

When man believes there is no one watching, he by nature is inclined to do what he wishes, even though there may be a realisation that it is wrong. Job, however, in his understanding

that God knew all his ways and recognised all his sins, was doubly careful or observing in every way lest he offend God. Our brother continued:

“My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up my iniquity.” Job 14:17.

It might be thought that if transgressions are sealed up in a bag they are hidden or being taken away. But here was an even greater comprehension on Job's part—that all his transgressions, all his iniquity (and who is without such) were known unto God, as if it were written in a book against a time of judgment. Jeremiah also realised this and said to God in prayer:

“... thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men: to give every one according to the fruit of his doings.” Jeremiah 32:19.

Was not this realisation a part of the faith of these faithful men, helping them in their determination to retain their integrity as Job so clearly expressed?

“All the while my breath is in me, ... my lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit ... till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.” Job 27:3—5.

Knowing surely that he did transgress and that God was fully aware of these failures, Job's confidence was that God would be merciful to him and forgive these sins, but only as he would recognise and learn from them in the spirit that David expressed:

“I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.”

Psalm 32:5.

Let us then see more clearly, as we are helped by Job's humble and contrite spirit, that God does know all our transgressions and in a figure seals them in a bag, stored up against the day of judgment, unless we are ever alert, searching our hearts and appreciating the extent of our weakness and failure. Then with sorrow we can bring forth fruits of repentance, and by His infinite mercy have them washed away through the blood of His Son, our Redeemer.

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Will we not walk more circumspectly if we can keep in mind this sobering truth that nothing can be hidden from or will be forgotten by the Almighty who is a loving Father to those who are ready to hear Him and seek His way?

J.A.DeF.



Correspondence

We are in receipt of correspondence from E.R.H. and may we say first of all that we appreciate the zeal of the writer; indeed his evident desire is to help us. Our natural sentiment would be to respond to the kindness shown; but alas how can we, if by doing so we fail the Truth which is so essential, and so also fail our correspondent?

If our desire was merely to get the better of our correspondent by argument how flawed our work would be. If we were to be of contentious spirit how could this really be a contending for the faith which grows in the spirit of meekness?

When we quote the letter of our correspondent it is not to belittle him, but rather in replying to the same we endeavour to reciprocate help, not only to such an one, but also to others who may read what follows.

LETTER FROM E.R.H.

Sincere greetings in the Hope of Israel. I trust you are well after all these years, for, many years ago I corresponded with you at the time of the W. J. Elston controversy. Bro Elston gave me his last copy of the book entitled "The Enmity" of which you will be well versed like myself. I can only look back over the years at the age of 74½ years and lament at what took place originally in June 1923. I have the record "The Birmingham Trouble" so you will know that I am well versed in these issues.

Whatever the argument over the Pearce/Davis issue, these two brethren eventually denied that Christadelphians are permitted to do work in the police force. I believe it was about 1945 that most of those who "went out from us" decided to return and still others from time to time return to the original Christadelphian body now known as the "Central Fellowship".

The history of those who did go out from us in 1923 was not commendable as I recently pointed out to the editor of the "Bible Searcher and Witness" magazine who brought the 1923 division up again. I put the matter quite clear to him and went into all the details but he omitted to reply which is quite usual in this Laodicean epoch in which we live. The facts are that following the 1923 division the two Brethren Jannaway fell out — NOT ABOUT FIRST PRINCIPLES but personalities which could easily

have been dealt with had a bit more appreciation have been given to the pages of the "ECCLESIAL GUIDE". Splinter divisions ensued and then W. J. Elston THOUGHT he could establish what he called a "PURE FELLOWSHIP". I went and heard him speak on this issue and corresponded with him up to the time of his death. I thought "Yes, here is a brother who has spent his life quarrelling whereas if he had put it in the service of the TRUTH, look what COULD have been done!"

You are one of the best to answer the question as to whether the "PURE FELLOWSHIP" worked! — and so the fact is that the remnant of those who "went out from us" in 1923 eventually broke up amongst themselves so that today the last remnant seems to be "Messrs The Apostolic Ecclesia" whose headquarters are in S.E. London. I have tried to reason with them but all who will not join "THEIR FELLOWSHIP" are called MR. or MRS!

How strange when all claim to accept the BIRMINGHAM AMMENDED STATEMENT OF FAITH! How strange when upon public acceptance of these first principles each was baptised by total immersion into the name of Jesus Christ — or to use the BIBLE formula the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, because we are associated with these things. Upon obeying this command each member the next Sunday partook of the emblems — not to remember personalities but to remember the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Each member therefore were a brother or sister of Jesus Christ and whether splinter groups in the HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH like it or not they were and still are fellow members in Christ's sight or to use a significant word — CHRISTADELPHIANS. You can, if you like spell it with a small "c".

If those who disregarded the exhortation of Dr. Thomas (read carefully the enclosed which I have photocopied) had remained WITH US instead of "holding up the hands" of those who the apostle John rebuked in 1 John 2:19 also 1 John 4:20 then the household of faith would be in a much better position to testify to the world "The things concerning the Kingdom of GOD and the name of Jesus Christ." The enclosed matter re the Seven Ecclesias and Dr. Thomas's view on fellowship IS VERY SERIOUS. You and I and others of our generation are now nearing the end of our probation. On accepting the Truth JESUS ASKED TWO THINGS OF US IN PARTICULAR. (a) to remember him in Breaking of Bread and (b) the exhortation of Mark 13:37. SOON we shall have to give account of our stewardship. Brethren

Butterfield, Elston, Viner Hall, those who walked off in 1957 over the "Old Paths" issue and also in 1923 over the "Birmingham Trouble" — yes, we shall all meet again in that assembly of 100 MILLION (Daniel 7:10) What will we have to talk about? If former "crotchets" then we shall be found to have been "feeding on ashes". What will be our attitude to those from the "Central" ecclesias? 1 John 4:20 or John 13:34—35? Neither will it be any use confronting Jesus with Luke 13:26. Yahweh called us to the Kingdom, not W. J. Elston or W. G. Butterfield. One man recently heard about Christadelphians and phoned the recording brother of the Belfast ecclesia to learn more. He was given "Christendom Astray to read. He read it THREE TIMES and saw what the Truth demands from each of us who wish to obey it. Upon the evidence of that book he asked to be BAPTISED INTO CHRIST. Those at the Belfast ecclesia carried out his request. If at the Judgment seat he is confronted by brethren F. G. & A. Jannaway, W. J. Elston and yourself and you tell him like W. J. E. once tried to tell me — that I was baptised into the Christadelphian body and not Jesus Christ, what do you think this brother's verdict will be and, worse still, that of the Lord Jesus Christ?

We learned and accepted the Truth and the angel of the LORD was given the charge of us (Psalm34:7). In view of this what do you think of Luke 17:1—2? How much better it would have been if those who "WENT OUT FROM US" had continued with us and have been amongst that class of Malachi 3:16 and have spent their time "feeding the flock" doing what Mark 13:17 commands and following out the words of Hymn 161 in Bro. Roberts' book "Brethren, let us walk together in the bonds of love and peace" — yes "esteeming our brother better than ourselves" etc.

To those who have done this we shall meet one another joyfully at the Judgement seat — Yes, as Hymn 158 says "With JOY if yet with fear" — not the fear of those who are expecting condemnation but the fear that Moses, Paul and others of the Household of faith who have spent their lives holding up one another's hands in "those things which are most surely believed amongst us."

Yes, Paul exhorts us to earnestly contend FOR THE TRUTH but if we use that contention in regard to personalities then Paul in Romans 2:8 is very severe. The least we can do is all we can to enable our brethren and sisters to attain the 30% or 60% in the parable of the sower. If we can help them to attain 100% how joyful it will be to associate with that grand company who will be

called upon to give account of their stewardship and then when the Kingdom is established to go forth in the name of Jesus Christ to minister to the nations and teach them the Truth in the time of which Paul speaks in 1 Cor. 2:9. I trust that you will review the position and do like those of the "Bereans" of 1945 who decided to come back to us, feed the flock, and, even if things lacked that "Perfection" which Christ told us to strive for they, with us made the best of the situation to "strengthen the things which remain".

In view of this I am amazed that some who "hold up the hands of" Diotrefes who refused fellowship even to the inspired Apostle John have the effrontery to call those who, like our brother I mentioned just now, who read "Christendom Astray" THREE TIMES after which he was baptised into Jesus Christ — those who call such "MR" or "MRS" have a great responsibility on their shoulders.

With love in the TRUTH I remain your sincere brother in Jesus Christ.

REPLY OF THE REMNANT TO THE ABOVE

We of course are bound to agree with the comment of the writer that the history from 1923 was not a commendable one, but may we also say that the history prior to 1923 was also not commendable. However, 1923 was a crisis year, and may we submit that it is a mistake to think that in times of trouble it is the minority of a division who "go out". Surely those who "go out" are always those who by error cause division? The keeping of the original name by reason of numbers does not give licence to the claim of "remaining" if the majority is in declension. Dr. Thomas has been quoted by our correspondent, but may we respectfully submit that in the same article that is sent to us, the doctor affirms:-

"Those who hold Paul's doctrine, ought not to worship with a body that does not ... it might require me to separate from the nearest and dearest. No good is effected by compromising the principles of the truth ..."

Please excuse our not quoting the doctor in full, but as the above remarks can hardly be open to differing interpretations, and are in keeping with the stand of Dr. Thomas in 1866, we have abbreviated to save space.

What then remains to be considered? Is it not the question of the rightness or wrongness of what occurred in 1923? If the Bereans were in error then they committed a dreadful wrong. But if the stand they made was right then surely the other party in the division of that time was in error, for both sections could not have been right according to Truth.

The stand of the minority is expressed as follows:-

“... if under existing conditions, we continue in fellowship with the Temperance Hall, we commit ourselves to the toleration of this position — that it is not a sin to use force in the service of the Sin-powers of the world; that it is not wrong to fellowship brethren who join the constabulary; and that we sanction the exclusion from fellowship of faithful brethren and sisters, whose only fault is that of protesting against the unscriptural proceedings of the Temperance Hall Arranging Brethren.”

Was, then, this stand of the Bereans for doctrine or not? The Leadership of Temperance Hall stated their position as follows:-

“We as an Executive are not open to re-discuss the question you raise, neither the conversations between individual brethren. Our final word was issued in the pamphlet “Birmingham Frictions 1917-1923”. Since then we have closed the matter.”

This statement implied that those who had made a stand on the matter of using force were to be rejected as contentious persons. But there was indeed scriptural principle for the course they took as here quoted:-

“Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.
A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

... I would they were even cut off which trouble you ...”
(Galatians 5:7—12)

To the Galatians the Apostle Paul was specific in his council, “If any man preach another gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:9). Note: Accursed, anathema, ex-communicated.

The principle of non-violence is indisputably part of the gospel, no amount of philosophising can expunge its essential place in the understanding of the truth. Did the Bereans make a stand on this principle?

This consideration brings another question. Can we accept that ex-communicated ones, those disfellowshipped because of declension, are still bringing converts to the Truth? Are those who join such error children of the Truth, or converts of a society divided from the Truth? The book of Revelation contains grave warnings for the last days, as no doubt all our readers will readily accept. What does the spirit mean then, when to the Thyatiran apostate it declares that because “she repented not ... I will kill her children with death ...” (Rev. 2:21—23)? Surely those added to a Body withdrawn from, as a result of the propagations of that Body, are the progeny of that Body, and if they remain in fellowship therein are in no different a position to those who originally were rejected? The Apostle John was told the state of the Thyatiran Ecclesia, and all to whom he addressed his inspired message would ignore it to their peril if they joined with such. As for some joining in ignorance that which had been divided from because of error, would God leave the devout and seeking mind indefinitely in such ignorance, especially when God’s inspired message shows ignorance also to be sin?

In conclusion there is Luke 17:1—2 to contemplate:-

“Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!

It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.”

What is the offence of which Christ is speaking? Is it the offence of upsetting Brethren and Sisters by protesting to them that they are not keeping the truth, when indeed they *are not* keeping the truth? Or is the offence caused when some put forward error as being acceptable to the Truth? Note the word “offence” — skandalon, ie. snare, or cause of sin.

May our correspondent please consider these points which we raise, as also our other readers. The history of the truth in these last days is a lamentable one and is not a subject to be ignored. But the test of what has been right and what has been wrong, and what the present true position should be, is surely according to a “rightly dividing (of) the word of truth.”

We invite Christadelphians to send for our free book which outlines the history of Christadelphia from the days of Dr. Thomas. Copies can be obtained by applying to the addresses as given on the front of this magazine.

What is Truth? (John 18:38) Part 25

JACOB AND THE BLESSING

ISAAC in his old age became blind. Being mindful that he must go the way of all flesh he sent for Esau and charged him to bring meat taken in hunting, after which he would talk to Esau of God's blessing, which had passed from Abraham to himself, and which he desired would pass down to his eldest son.

Esau obeyed, not because he venerated the things of the truth, but because he desired favour and a position over his brother Jacob.

But Rebekah had heard, and what an influence a determined woman can have on the course of events. She counselled Jacob to bring meat out of their flock, which she cooked and seasoned in the way she knew would be a pleasing meal to Isaac. She then instructed Jacob to go in with this food to seek the blessing from his father instead of Esau. "But if my father holds me he will know that I am not Esau, and will curse me as a deceiver," said Jacob. But Rebekah had a plan; she clothed Jacob with Esau's clothing and fastened the hairy skin of the goats in a clever fashion upon the backs of Jacobs hands and on the back of his neck to make him appear hairy like Esau. Yet though Isaac could not see, he could hear quite well, and was uncertain at the voice of his visitor. How poignant Isaac's words, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau" and again "Art thou my very son Esau?" to which question Jacob replied, "I am."

So Isaac was deceived, and after the repast the father's love for his son was expressed in the words "Come near now, and kiss me, my son." As Isaac smelled the fragrance of Esau's clothing which Jacob wore, he began to speak with that eloquence which comes of an appreciation of the things of the Spirit.

"... See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed ... Let people serve thee and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be that blesseth thee."

Gen. 27:27—29.

It was the true prophecy of the Spirit, for this was indeed the purpose of God through Jacob. It had to be this even though Jacob had become a deceiver, for God knew what future events

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would bring. This simply is the basic reason for that outcome, even though Jacob and his mother were at fault at the time.

So it is recorded from the word of God:

“... that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

It was said unto her, (Rebekah) The elder shall serve the younger.

As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”
(Romans 9:11—13)



Signs of His coming and of the End of the World

“But evil ... shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.”
(2 Timothy 3:13)

Governments have their “official secrets” acts. How convenient for them when they decide to cover up dreadful mistakes from their peoples. It is a sign of the times, for probably more than ever before the peoples of the world are being deceived.

The contention about whether there should be nuclear power generation continues. But the vociferous leadership has the ability which comes of its temporal power, to allay its peoples' fears about the deadly nuclear installations upon their doorsteps.

But sometimes the truth does slip out. How striking then recently after some thirty years since the event, that it is now revealed that the Windscale, in Cumbria, nuclear accident was similar in its widespread threat to health to the more recent Chernobyl tragedy.

The Windscale fire actually occurred in a military plant at Windscale where uranium was being processed into plutonium for Britain's atomic weaponry. A graphite reactor over-heated, and as a result radio-active isotopes poured into the atmosphere. For two days specially dressed technicians and scientists struggled to halt this deadly escape, for example by pouring in water, but they could not prevent a radio-active cloud spreading over Europe. The atomic pile was eventually cover by seven inches of steel and over eight feet of concrete. Even now, thirty years later, it is still warm inside that pile, and much study is still going on as to what next can be done, for there is over twenty tons of radio-active material in the special encasement. At this site there are also two large chimneys, four hundred feet high, and there is talk of demolishing the top fifty foot of each chimney, presumably because of what remains in their materials from the escape of so long ago.

How foolish men are in meddling with such substances which are so insidiously devastating and of long enduring effect when they get out of control. Of course the cry of excuse is that nuclear power is a very necessary requirement for the economy of a nation. This is not so; but the nuclear industry does provide the side product for nuclear weaponry, which nations in their foolishness still desire to hold. Meanwhile their peoples are kept in the dark about the danger of such things, even as the scripture has foretold.

News from the Ecclesias

EDEN, NEW YORK, Grange Hall, Church Street.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m.

Sunday School 1.45 p.m.

Bible Class: Midweek: Forestville and Hamburg

Alternate Week: Revelation Study.

The work of witnessing continues, bringing encouragement through a steady response to advertising and correspondence.

The message from the Fraternal Gathering in Manchester was much appreciated. It strengthens the bonds and gives courage to endure until God's purpose is accomplished through His Son. Notes on the brethren's addresses were also received and we found them most helpful.

J.A.DeF.

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MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

Sunday: Breaking of Bread 11 a.m.

Thursday: Bible Class 7.30 p.m.

Interest in our magazine continues as also in the booklet outlining the history of the truth in these last days, which history indeed gives cause for very sober reflection.