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The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of
Papal and Protestant Christendom

A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

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

“Take heed that ye be not deceived”

“AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD”

“THE TEMPLE TO COME”

“AUSTRALIAN DIFFICULTIES”

“A BIBLE CLASS”

“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

“TO STIR YOU UP”

WE have listened to the words of Peter this morning — words which he wrote “to the strangers scattered abroad”, and “to them that have obtained like precious faith with us ... ” Peter was an apostle, one sent forth, having been earlier called by Jesus while he was pursuing his work as a fisherman. He was close to Jesus during His three and one-half years of ministry. He saw the miracles, was present at His transfiguration, listened to His powerful words; he witnessed His death, and after His resurrection could say with John, “our hands have handled” Him. We know of Peter’s desire to serve his Lord, and in that desire he vowed:

“...Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee...”
Matthew 26:35.

In this he failed, for he did deny Him and then, realizing what had done, he “wept bitterly”. Previously Jesus, knowing Peter’s determination but also his weakness, had said:

“...I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”
Luke 22:32.

And after the resurrection, Jesus exhorted Peter to show his declared love, saying:

“...Feed my sheep.”
John 21:15-16-17.

Here was a work given to Peter by his Master: “strengthen thy brethren” — “feed my sheep.” Jesus knew how much the brethren would need fortifying, and also a careful tending of these sheep by those sent forth as shepherds. This was the way Peter could show his love for Jesus. He did carry out Jesus’s wishes as we have see in the Acts.

In reading Peter’s letters we are given an insight into his mind as he went about his work. He gloried in that he was:

“...a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ...”

II Peter 1:1.

How much we can be uplifted spiritually, Brethren and Sisters, as we perceive the spirit revealed in these letters. The words have been preserved for our food and strength as we today are just a few “strangers scattered” and “of like precious faith.”

In our reading this morning we discern that as Peter wrote these words, he was close to the time of his death:

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“knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.”

II Peter 1:14.

We do not know specifically when or how he died, but we have reason to believe he was put to death for the name of Jesus. As he labored to strengthen and feed, he could look back over his experiences, remembering how he had failed, and praying that his labors now were acceptable to Jesus and to His Father. He believed and exhorted:

“...we, according to His purpose, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

II Peter 3:13-14.

This was Peter's hope and he labored to give life and meaning to his brethren — and to us also today, so we might realize that all constituting this present order is fleeting, and will surely pass away under the hand of Jesus when He returns. Can we not be fed and strengthened in this glorious hope as were his brethren over 1900 years ago? Let us listen to his words today:

“...give diligence to make your calling and election sure: ...For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord...”

II Peter 1:10-11.

Working on his brethren's behalf, he continued:

“Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle to stir you up by putting you in remembrance.”

II Peter 1:12-13.

Peter's care to continually remind his brethren is further seen:

“This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.”

II Peter 3:1.

His work was to arouse and stimulate his brethren even though he recognized that they already “knew” and were “established in the truth.” He also realized their needs (and ours), and being concerned that he was shortly to die, went about this work with due urgency — as indeed all God's work deserves to be done. Does not this work of Peter remind us of Jesus's words in

establishing the memorial feast — this very Table at which we have been permitted to meet this morning? "...This do in remembrance of me," said He. How needful is this remembering, the bringing to mind the things that God has desired of us, and also what He has so graciously provided for our strength, our food.

We see that "to put in remembrance" also was in the Almighty's purpose through His prophets as He "rose up early and sent". For example, we read among the last words of the Old Testament God's instruction through Malachi:

"Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb..." Malachi 4:4.

How we fail to keep alive in our hearts and minds that word of God which leads to the gift of life through Jesus! Other things can intrude, especially as we are busy, pressed, overtired — all of which can so easily crowd out the need to put first the making of our "calling and election sure".

Other prophets also brought to remembrance the Almighty's will. In Micah this morning we have listened to such words:

"Hear, all ye people; Hearken, O earth ... and let the Lord GOD be witness against you..." Micah 1:2.

And then the prophet went on to expose to Judah and Israel their evil doings, and the consequences soon to come. What then was to be done? The questions were asked:

"Wherewith shall I come before the LORD? ... shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Micah 6:6-7.

The response of the Lord brings to our remembrance what it is that He looks for first:

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Verse 8.

The Almighty was reminding His people how He had spoken through Moses so many years before. They should have known, for His words were clear, and so much like those of Micah:

"And now, Israel, what doth the LORD ... require ... but to fear the LORD ... to walk in all his ways, and to love

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him, and to serve the LORD ... with all thy heart and
and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments ...
and his statutes ... for thy good?"

Deuteronomy 10:12-13.

Multitudes of sacrifices, rivers of oil were meaningless without the basic spirit of the law, which was brought back to mind by Micah 750 years later in the simple words, "do justly, ... love mercy, and ... walk humbly with thy God." Israel needed this, and it is for us too — to perceive that our whole living must be to Him; and in single-minded purpose Israel and now we also, are to serve Him from the heart and not in the letter.

Going now back to Peter's letters, perceiving how he gave his life to stirring up his brethren to remembrance, strengthening them, feeding the sheep — are we not helped? Brethren and Sisters, let us keep more surely in mind the blessings bestowed, the hope granted, the love shown in His promises. How few have been able to keep these mercies in remembrance, yet how often His children have been shown what He looks for.

Going back once more to Moses's time, the Almighty gave Israel a simple command, yet one full of meaning and hope:

"Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments ... and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue:"
Numbers 15:38.

Why was this to be done? Moses continued:

"... that ye may look upon it, and *remember* all the commandments of the Lord, and do them; ... That ye may ... be holy unto thy God."
Verses 39-40.

His people would look on this fringe with its ribbon when they dressed each morning, when they went about their daily tasks, when they removed their garments for sleep. Always there was the fringe and the ribbon of blue to bring to remembrance God's word. It was with a lace (ribbon) of blue that the breast-plate engraved with Israel's names was bound over the high priest's heart as he went into the tabernacle to mediate for his covenanted people. Thus this simple blue ribbon and the fringes in their garments daily reminded God's people of His sure covenant which bound them to him through His High Priest, and reminded and enabled them to become indeed "holy unto ... God."

Perhaps we too need a ribbon of blue, for our busy human minds so often forget. But we do have each first day of the week, a remembrance — a feeding. We have each day the

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nourishing strength of His word as we read. We have brethren and sisters to come near, to communicate with, to help, and to be helped by. We have the faithful work of our brethren of old such as Peter who has indeed reminded and built us up today in our struggle to walk with God. Let us not fail to heed and take home his message read this morning:

“Wherefore ... brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: ... ”

2 Peter 1:10.

J.A.DeF.

The Temple to Come

IN our portions in Zechariah and Revelation, we are told of the promised return of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Zechariah we read of the promised one called the Branch and the hope that those who believe on Him have. Zechariah 6:12,13 and 15 says:

“... Behold the man whose name is The BANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel peace shall be between them both.

And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.”

At the time of Zechariah there was the hope of rebuilding in Jerusalem the temple of God, yet Zechariah here is foretelling also of the temple which is yet to come in the outworking of God's purpose. During the time of probation, there is a house of God in formation. Each of us hope, with the faithful of all ages, to become stones of which that future temple will formed. Therefore now these figurative stones must be smoothed by trial and tribulation until all the rough edges are removed. Only by this process can these stones be fitted into place when the time is right for the spiritual habitation of God to be assembled. Revelation chapter 11 speaks of the completed temple in verse 19 in all its power and glory:

“And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.”

This is our hope, to be part of that completed temple of God, therefore we struggle now to align ourselves to that perfect cornerstone, the Lord Jesus, endeavoring to follow His example in our living.

When we think of this promised inheritance, our mind goes back to the time of the children of Israel and the covenant they made with the Almighty as they prepared to enter into the land promised them. Joshua then an old man gave a last warning prior to his death as he said in Joshua 23:14-16:

“And behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.

Therefore it shall come to pass, that as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you: so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off the good land which the LORD your God hath given you.

When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.”

Here was a promise given — it they would follow God’s word then blessing and goodness would be bestowed upon them. But if they turned their backs on Him, they would suffer hardship and severity from His hand. The same message was given by Paul to his Roman brethren as he reminded them, as well as us today, in Romans 11:22:

“Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.”

In a similar vein, Paul beseeches his brethren at Corinth to more fully value the fellowship they had with God and His Son and not walk in the darkness of error, as he says in II Corinthians 6:14-18:

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for *ye are the temple of the living God*; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing and

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I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

These words of Paul instruct in the importance of keeping God's Truth pure and single in view by those who have been called to be part of this great house. His Truth is the means by which we may be built up, growing in stability and firmness. This same soundness must be in each of us as we face daily struggles and temptations, resolving to put down the natural inclinations of our flesh. The cornerstone of God's house is firm and true — the Lord Jesus — He who withstood perfectly the temptations of His own flesh to become a mediator and high priest for any who would follow Him. We cannot be part of this house unless we are aligned with the cornerstone, for we must be of the same design and shape in order to be pleasing to the Father. Paul speaks of this spiritual house in Ephesians 2:20-22:

“And (ye) are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

Peter confirms this thought as he says in I Peter 2:6-7:

“Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.”

It is not without purpose that God's word comes to help focus attention upon being prepared for this building and upon the place of Christ in that work. Must we not then during the time which remains before His promised return, endeavor to value the covenant God in His goodness has made known unto us, in order to show forth that right spirit which can glorify God both now and eternally. This can be our hope, but only as we submit and yield to the hand of the Master Builder upon us.

M.C.S.

Australian Difficulties

THIRTY years have elapsed since considerable effort was made to unite Christadelphian Ecclesias in Australia. At the time there seemed to be great hope of large settlement of controversy that had been long persisting. However doctrinal errors on the nature of man and of Jesus Christ still continue to be propagated, and are particularly obvious in Queensland. Two groups stand out distinctly, additional to those other ecclesias who are perhaps more positively identified with the Central position. Shield and Logos however are still in the practical sense separate entities, though technically they both assented to the Unity suggestion of the Cooper-Carter addendum of 1958. Apologists for fundamental differences have suggested that the Unity agreement allowed two separate views on the doctrine of of the Atonement. Obviously there are very many in Australia who will not accept such a proposition. Hence continuing difficulties with what can only be called schism even though there was what is now proved to have been a somewhat tenuous assent in some quarters to certain additions to the Statement of Faith in an effort to resolve what was particularly an Australian problem.

Whence came such deep seated difficulty? We will endeavour to trace past events to answer this question. But first of all may we quote from recent statements which indicate what the present position is of some members claiming to be of The Shield:

Statement 1: When the Unity Basis was accepted in 1958, many ecclesias and individuals in South East Queensland stated openly that they only accepted it with reservations. One may well ask how anybody could accept with reservations a Basis which contains the condition that any acceptance of it is without reservations, as the Unity Basis on page 13 of the Unity Booklet most assuredly does state. My answer to that question is "I don't know how they could accept it 'with reservations'."

Statement 2: In this Booklet I will set out my reservations about the B.A.S.F. and the Cooper-Carter Addendum. "Quite simply, I believe that about fifteen per cent of the B.A.S.F. contains error and the Cooper-Carter Addendum merely echoes that error. I believe that the error is of such a magnitude that it could jeopardize the salvation of those who actively or passively accept it."

The propagator of the above statements goes on to say: "You become 'in Adam' when you deliberately enter that state

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by committing sin. Similarly you are 'in Christ' when you choose to be converted and baptised." By saying this I am contradicting Bro. John Carter who wrote the following sentence in the Unity Book: "We are all 'in Adam' so long as we live; for 'in Adam' defines the physical relation we sustain to the first Man." (Unity Book page 61).

The Unity Book mentioned in the above comments has this to say:

One: That "the doctrines to be believed and taught by us, without reservation, are the first principles of the One Faith as revealed in the Scriptures, of which the B.A.S.F. gives a true definition."

Two: That where "any brethren depart from any element of the One Faith, either in doctrine or practice, they shall be dealt with according to the Apostolic precept and the extreme action would be ecclesial disfellowship of the offender."

Three: "If it is established that an ecclesia sets itself out by design to preach and propagate at large false doctrine, then it would become necessary to dissociate from such an ecclesia."

Here then is evidence that the efforts of thirty years ago have not brought about the wholehearted unity desired at the time, and which it was thought had been achieved. A circular has been distributed over the last twelve months or so from the Australian Christadelphian Committee having the heading: "The Historical relationship of U.K and Australian Ecclesias from the Australian perspective". The circular can be outlined as: *One*: Calling in question what took place in 1958 and the doctrinal foundation now purported to have been established at that time.

TWO: It states that the teaching of the late John Bell, a former Editor of The Christadelphian Shield on the Atonement is well reasoned and scripturally sound, listing the following points as a summary of that teaching:-

- 1/ There was no physical change arising out of the fall in Eden:
- 2/ That mortal flesh is not "given to sin":
- 3/ Evil in human beings is not inevitable nor is it impossible for "sinful flesh" to keep the law:
- 4/ Defilement is of character and not physical.

It must however be said that the present Management of the Australian Christadelphian Shield magazine has objected to the above in a statement which says that though the circular "has mentioned 'The Australian Christadelphian Shield', and quoted extensively from articles by a former Editor, the late Brother John Bell, who relinquished that position in 1928. The present Committee of Management of the magazine wish to state that as from the acceptance of the Unity Agreement by the Australian Ecclesias in 1958, the policy of the magazine has been to uphold the basis of fellowship as set out in the Unity Book pages 13 to 15 together with the addendum composed by Brethren Cooper and Carter in explanation of clauses 5 & 12 of the Birmingham amended Statement of Faith. Further as we have previously stated, there is no "Shield Fellowship". The Adelaide Ecclesia, under whose direction the magazine is published, is part of the world-wide community of Christadelphians in the Central Fellowship. This magazine and its Committee of Management is in no way responsible for, or connected with, the above mentioned document, and dissociates itself entirely from it.

Additionally, as a rejoinder to the circular, the Brisbane Ecclesia has also issued the following:-

It is with grief that we observe the writings of deceased, yet loved, honoured and respected brethren pressed out of alignment into extreme moulds irrelevant to the ecclesial context of their day.... For the sake of clarity the Arranging Brethren of the Brisbane Ecclesias have formulated the following positive statement...in relation to the four points in dispute (from A.C.C. Historical Document date February, 1987) which we have been asked to reject. Though man was created capable of dying, death was not inevitable so long as obedience continued. But man sinned, and death was inflicted by the imposition of the sentence in consequence.

All Adam's descendants share the physical consequences of that sentence and are by nature prone to sin. As sinners ourselves we are also morally related to death and stand in need of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Because Jesus was made of a woman and made under the law he was by his physical nature related to death, but not morally so, having never sinned. Christ's divine begettal contributed towards his sinlessness, and highlights our proven inability to be so.

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Because Jesus shared our nature his victory over sin proves to the enlightened that the pursuit of sin is inexcusable. By the grace of God great improvement is achievable, so sinlessness is beyond our reach. Nevertheless striving towards it is essential for the greatest improvement possible.

Logos in commenting on the present position of things has said that contrary to some claims, Logos welcomes Ecclesial unity, and will do all in its power to achieve it; but truth must not only be acknowledged as such, but demonstrated to be so by the repudiation of error. If fellowship is based on certain doctrines and principles, this must be applied in refusing those who not only fail to subscribe to such teaching, but actively repudiate it. Here then is seen a distinction between the groups referred to, though they technically accepted the unity agreement of 1958.

THE HISTORY OF THE 'CLEAN FLESH' ERROR

News from Sidney (Australia) 1904 reads as follows:-

It is with feelings of regret that we inform you that we having been compelled to withdraw our fellowship from a large number of brethren and sisters in this city for reasons hereafter stated. As you know, an amalgamation took place, about twelve months ago. ... It was believed by the majority of us that they had renounced the erroneous views that had been the means of keeping the two bodies separate for years. Some of these views were: "No sin in the flesh"; "Adam mortal before the fall"; "Christ's nature pure and undefiled in every sense"; "Christ did not need to die for himself"; "The present possession of eternal life". It has since transpired that upon some of these questions they have not altered their views at all; and not only so, but they have succeeded in converting many of our old brethren and sisters to those views since their admittance to our body ... We are determined to uphold the Bible and the teaching of Dr. Thomas and Brother Roberts.

John Bell who was the editor of *The Shield* at the time, contended that the Birmingham Statement of Faith was untrue in its statements in Clause 5, those writing from Sidney to England opposed him.

In 1905 the other side of the controversy wrote to Birmingham with words of admonishment saying they had to express surprise and regret that the editor should have seen fit to insert in the Birmingham publication reports of such a character, before making proper enquiry or investigation as to their correctness; and especially deploring the seeming hastiness manifested in supplementary remarks, by which support was given to those referred to as having "*gone out from us in a manner alike contrary to the ecclesial constitution and the commandments of Christ.*"

John Bell's supporters went on to say, "We also deny that there was anything improper in regard to the amalgamation of the two Sydney ecclesias some eighteen months ago; the negotiations were carried out by the executives of the two bodies and the union effected on the basis of the Statement of Faith then existent in the Albert Hall ecclesia, and all the members of the Temperance Hall body affirmed their belief in the same; the arrangements were confirmed by the amalgamated body without any dissent at the next business meeting of the ecclesia ... In regard to the alteration in clause 5 of the Statement of Faith in the year 1900 we also deny that this was made in a "mysterious" way — the matter of amendment was brought

forward at meetings of a committee of twenty brethren appointed "to revise the constitution and Statement of Faith", and formed the subject of correspondence with other ecclesias, and was brought before the ecclesia in the report of the committee, and adopted by a ballot vote of the ecclesia three years prior to the amalgamation. ... We object to being branded as heretics because we cannot endorse the extraordinary teaching concerning Christ of some of the leading local brethren amongst those who have seceded from the ecclesia, of which the following are specimens: The reason why he was holy, harmless, and undefiled was because he was the Son of God. The reason why he could do what you and I cannot do, was because God was operating in him. God said the things by a machine; God put forth his arm to help him when he could not help himself." ... When teaching like this is put forward in explanation of clause 5 of the Statement of Faith, and to show how Jesus was 'holy, harmless, and undefiled' and at the same time 'defiled', we think that you will agree with us that it is time to consider the advisability of using expressions that would not be susceptible of being twisted to support such teaching."

To this message the editor at Birmingham responded as follows:- "We are not responsible for the division that has arisen; but we are responsible for our attitude towards the parties, and we are bound to say we have no sympathy with the doctrine that traverses Clause Five of the Statement of Faith, and denies that physical defilement followed Adam's transgression. As to Brother Bell's allegation that the change in wording of this clause (about 1886, we believe) is due to the abandonment of the doctrine "that God implanted a principle of death in the body of Adam", it is sufficient to point to Brother Roberts's words in answer to a correspondent as late as 1898: 'Sin, as disobedience, arose in their (Adam and Eve's) case from a wrong opinion concerning a matter of lawful desire, and not from what Paul calls 'sin in the flesh'. It became sin in the flesh when it brought forth that sentence of death that made them mortal, and all their children with them; that is, this sentence passed because of sin, affected their bodily state and implanted in their flesh a law of dissolution that became the law of their being.' As to the facts connected with the sin and death in relation to Adam and Eve we recommend those who are not clear on the matter to study Dr. Thomas's exposition in *Elois Israel*, chapter 3.

A reply from John Bell's Group ultimately came as follows:- Concerning Adam (we) believe: That he was made in the image of God, a natural body, from the dust of the ground and animated by the breath of life, and therefore of a corruptible nature, a

mortal *in constitution*, but not subject to death until after he sinned. That his destiny was not determined until he transgressed God's law, when it was declared by God, on account of his disobedience, that he would return to the dust of the ground from whence he was taken, and that until such would eventuate he would eat bread in the sweat of his brow. That he was precluded from eating of the tree of life after his disobedience by being driven from the garden of Eden. That in consequence of Adam's first transgression death passed upon all men. *They do not believe* that the declaration of God to Adam changed his organism, or that he was corporeally defiled thereby, although he was physically affected by his changed conditions as a result of God's decree.

Concerning Jesus, John Bell's Group continued:- That he was the seed of Abraham and David, of like nature to them, though miraculously begotten of the Virgin Mary, and was therefore in the days of his flesh, a mortal man, and a sufferer from all the effects that came by Adam's transgression, including the death that passed upon all men. That he was tempted in all points like unto us, having all the propensities or impulses to sin common to our nature, and consequently, though sinless, he required to be redeemed from his weak, corruptible, and mortal nature. That on account of his personal holiness of character, and his perfect obedience to his Father's will, he was an acceptable sacrifice for sin, and was raised from the dead, immortalised, and exalted to the right hand of God. *They do not believe* that there is any warrant whatever for saying that he was "defiled", "unclean", "tainted", or such like, as no inspired apostle or prophet has applied such language to him.

The reply to this from Birmingham was as follows:- The Word knows nothing of a "mortal constitution which is yet not subject to death". It makes no such statement concerning Adam. The Word always uses the term "mortal" with the meaning "subject to death", and we decline participation in the enterprise of putting another meaning on it. That is how the apostacy arose, which proclaims as its fundamental doctrine, that man is "mortal in constitution, but not subject to death", that is in the inward part, the immortal soul. But if the I.O.O.F. brethren and Brother Bell among them, we presume, now affirm that Adam was made "mortal in constitution, but *not* subject to death", what are we to make of the Shield's warm approval of the following:- "Now, I will give proof positive that it was a *mortal body* before he sinned. 'Mortal' means '*subject to death*'. Proof that Adam was mortal before he sinned: Genesis 2:17 — 'Thou shalt surely die'. Thus a brother writes in the Shield for June last, (ie. 1905)

and Brother Bell, on the same page, calls it shining truth! The grave fallacy of the statement is that it misrepresents God, for the statement of Genesis 2:17 is "*In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*" Death was contingent upon disobedience, as also says the apostle "death by sin" (Romans 5:12) How then, does this brother say that Adam was *subject to death before he sinned*? How also, do those who upheld him now affirm the very opposite? This is only one of many illustrations of the distressing confusions that have arisen. If Adam's destiny "was not determined until he transgressed God's law", which is perfectly true, how could he be mortal, which means subject to death, before transgression? Let the I.O.O.F. brethren first tell us exactly what they understand by "mortal". And then let them adhere to the definition given, and one step will be made towards re-union.

The statement of belief concerning Jesus is very good, but the qualifying clause added spoils it. If the nature of Jesus, which was human nature, as is truly stated, was "weak, corruptible, and mortal", which it undoubtedly was, how can these brethren say they do not believe in calling it "unclean". Is sin's flesh clean? We are all agreed about the character of the Lord Jesus. In the Shield, September (1905) Brother Bell rightly answers the question: "Does the Holy Spirit teach that flesh-nature is an unclean or evil thing?" He rightly says "Yes". How then, can he object to the term "unclean" and go on saying that Jesus was "*by nature separate from sinners*"? One of the prophets sees in vision Joshua, the high priest, "clothed with filthy garments" (Zech. 3:3) Does not this represent Jesus burdened with mortality? And does not the context figuratively represent the change of nature of which the Lord Jesus was the subject in resurrection to immortality? "Take away the *filthy garments* from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused *thine iniquity* to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." A nature represented by "filthy garments" and "iniquity" is surely "defiled". Let the brethren affirm the truth and *withdraw their negative qualifications*, and confidence will be restored. Till then the Christadelphians will only undertake to speak for those who "speak as the oracles of God". We will not be responsible for anything else.

THE REMNANT'S COMMENT ON THE FOREGOING FACTS

It will be seen from the evidence that Shield and Temperance Hall (later Central) were not in unity in 1905 on certain doctrinal matters. In 1958 an attempt was made to settle the differences, but the old trouble smoulders on, even though it

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had been thought that Shield had completely rectified themselves. So a core of difference remains with one side expressing they are not out of unity though allowing propagation of things not acceptable to the other side. While the other side protests and makes a stand on old and sound principles. The Remnant asks its readers to weigh over the evidence, and raises the question, "Does re-union work?" As to the nature of the Lord Jesus Christ, is not the truth simple? He was the "seed of the woman". "...how can he be clean that is born of a woman?" And when the days of purification according to the law were accomplished for Mary, after Jesus's circumcision, the prescribed sacrifice was made, "...a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons". The truth of the matter is that "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh", not a different flesh. (1 John 4:3).

(POSTSCRIPT) FROM "THE CHRISTADELPHIAN" APRIL 1988

Thirty years ago Brother John Carter, a former editor of The Christadelphian, was invited to Australia to render assistance in framing the basis upon which re-union between Shield and Central Ecclesias was achieved. The good work which Brother Carter was blessed to be able to perform has been respected by all who have enjoyed the fruits of his labours. Consequently, during the ensuing period the Unity agreement itself has rarely been challenged, but unhappily the perfect accord and true fellowship which might have been expected have been enjoyed only in a few parts of the country. Over the years two major groups of ecclesias (not identifiable with the fellowships which were re-united) have been formed in most of the states. Association between the groups has been minimal and at times an un-Christlike spirit has been evident between them. It is neither our intention, nor our desire to allocate blame, and not a great deal of benefit can be gained from a minute analysis of the past... Nevertheless, it is now commonly admitted that within the last two decades, each group has hardened into a polarised position. This originally arose from a disagreement on how to address doctrinal problems.... Attempts have been made to justify separation on non-fundamental issues ... even though the ecclesias concerned remain technically on the same basis of fellowship. Relationships have frequently become so strained that many brethren and sisters have felt it better to operate only within a like-minded group ... than to risk ... almost constant friction.

A Bible Class

*"EAT THOU NOT THE BREAD OF HIM THAT HATH
AN EVIL EYE."* Proverbs 23:6.

The question which immediately comes to mind is — what is an evil eye? The law provides an answer. Moses, in revealing God's mercy and love in the provision for a poor brother, instructed:

"... thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need ..."

Deuteronomy 15:8.

Aware of man's natural feeling, God warned:

"Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, ... the year of release it at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought ... and it be sin unto thee." Verse 9.

An evil eye is a reflection of a perverse or froward heart, and the Spirit says that it is sin. Jesus's words confirm this teaching of the law:

"... if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness ..."

Matthew 6:23.

If the heart is fastened upon one's own desires rather than showing love and care for brethren, it is evil — hateful to God. Is it not true that the thoughts of man's heart may sometimes be discerned in his eyes?

Our consideration then in Proverbs 23:6, warns against eating the bread of such a one. Why is this? In a practical sense, to accept favor or a gift from such would put one in danger of being used for or drawn into his purposes, as verse 7 reveals:

"... Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee."

Further, to partake of his bread or to desire his dainty meats could be a sharing of his wrongly gotten gains, and could easily involve one in his evil ways. The instruction of Paul in this regard is quite clear:

"Wherefore come out from among them (those exhibiting an evil heart), and be ye separate, ... touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you ... saith the Lord Almighty."

II Corinthians 6:17-18.

We bring to mind the first tempting offer of "meat" in Eden by one with an evil eye, as the serpent beguiled Eve to eat of the forbidden tree. She did and Adam also, and thus sin came into the world and the sentence of death has prevailed over man ever since.

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How wise is God's counsel: "Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye". Let us take heed, realizing how easily "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" can lure us away from our hope of redemption through Jesus. Also let us be aware that He has warned against a human weakness:

"...Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Matthew 6:24.
J.A.DeF.

Signs of His coming and of the End of the World

“... both these kings hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table ...” (Daniel 11:27).

Much has been made of the international agreement for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Afghanistan. Of the document signed in Geneva by the representatives of the major powers.

But then the next thing that was revealed was that weapons were still being poured into Afghanistan by the Soviet Union, to give strength to the pro-Russian regime against the Moslem-guerrilla forces. But why are the guerillas such a threat to the Kabul government? Because the U.S.A. via Pakistan is pouring in supplies of weaponry to the resistance forces. What then does the agreement of the two Super-Powers denote? Is it really peace? The ancient prophecy supplies the answer, “... they shall speak lies at one table ...” For the battle still goes on under a new guise.

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.

Supplications are for guidance and help in the continued work of witnessing. Due to concerns expressed and certain questions by Christadelphians, we are planning additional advertising where so indicated. It is a work most encouraging in response and we feel grateful for the opportunity to serve in this way.

J.A.DeF.

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MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

Sunday: Breaking of Bread 10.30 a.m.

Thursday: Bible Class 7.30 p.m.

As preparation is made for a visit here from the States, we look forward to such an event making tangible the closeness of Brethren and Sisters both far and near, who are always near in spirit.